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# UNDER THE OLD FLAG

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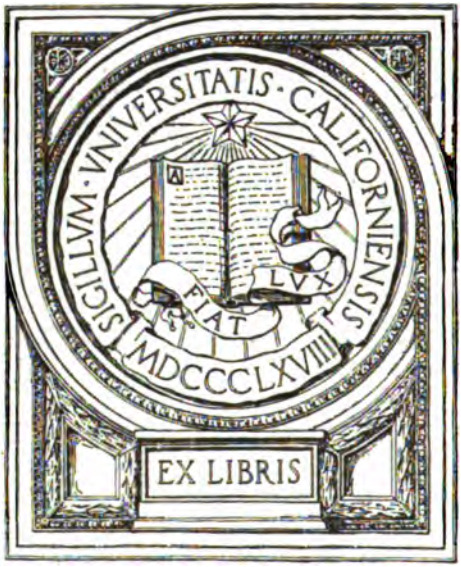

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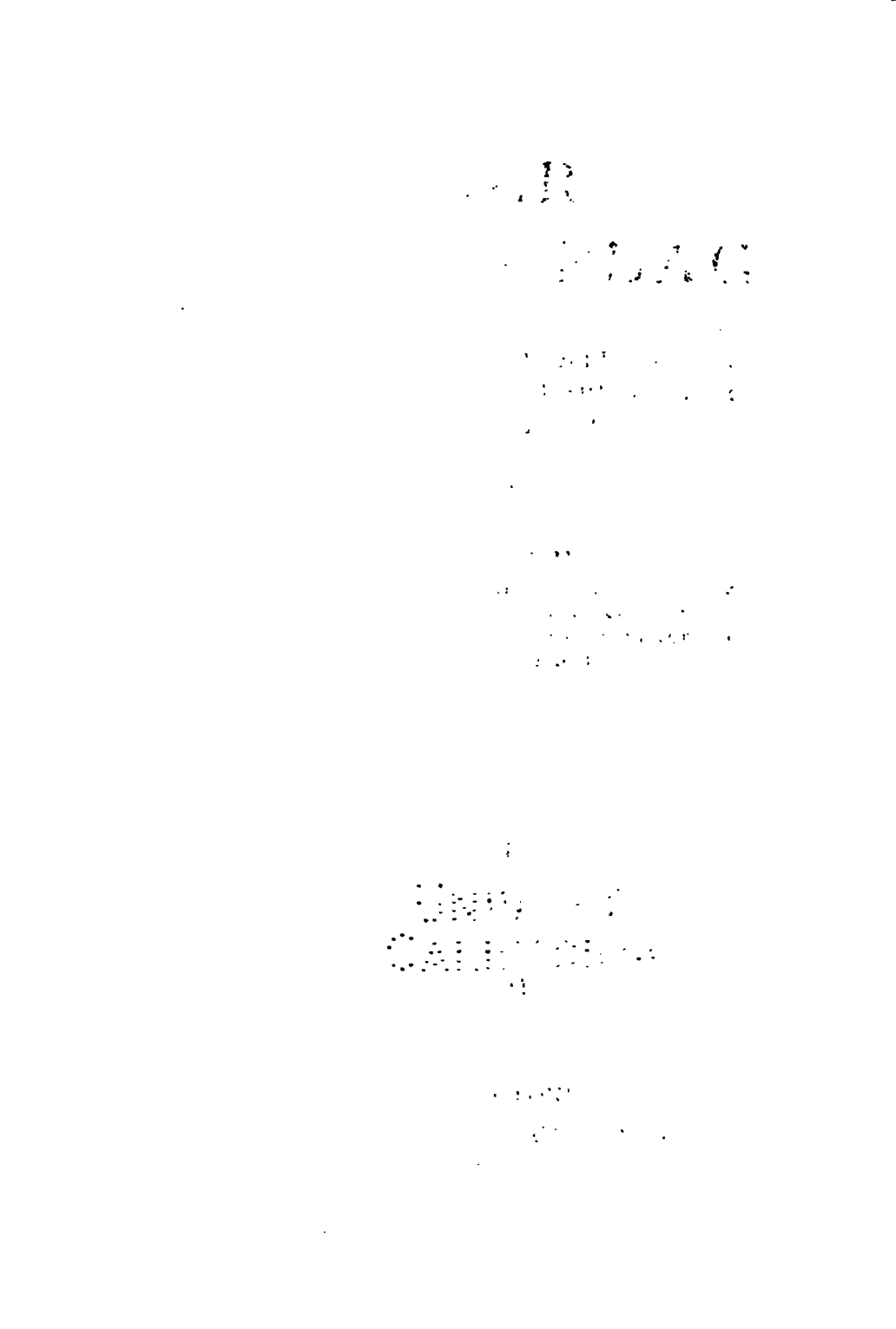
James Harrison Wilson
Late Major General U.S.V.



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# UNDER THE OLD FLAG

RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE WAR FOR THE UNION, THE SPANISH WAR THE BOXER REBELLION, ETC.

BY

JAMES HARRISON WILSON

BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL U. S. A.; LATE MAJOR-GENERAL U. S. V.
ENGINEER AND INSPECTOR-GENERAL ON GRANT'S STAFF
COMMANDER THIRD CAVALRY DIVISION, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC
COMMANDER CAVALRY CORPS M. D. M., ETC.

VOLUME II

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## VOLUME II

## I

### REORGANIZING AND COMMANDING SHERMAN'S CAVALRY

Correspondence leading to detail—Large but widely scattered command—Join Sherman at Gaylesville—Hearty welcome and carte blanche—But little confidence in cavalry—Conversations with Sherman—Fit out Kilpatrick for March to the Sea—Cavalry expedition to Blue Mountain—Join Thomas at Nashville.

The correspondence which led to my detail for the important work of reorganizing and commanding Sherman's cavalry is interesting. It gives a glimpse of the grim humor in which Sherman[1] often, and Grant sometimes,[2] indulged. It also shows the flattering estimate in which those great soldiers held me, as well as the unflattering estimate in which up to that time they held the western cavalry and its leaders. I had just passed twenty-seven and had seen but six months' service with cavalry in the field, but I had been in the war from the beginning and was not lacking confidence or ambition.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 203.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 750.

The telegrams are found in the Official Records but widely apart, and as they have never been collected in one publication, it may be worth while to quote them here. The first, from Grant at City Point to Sherman at Atlanta, was dated September 22, 1864, 10 P. M. It runs as follows:

Do you not require a good cavalry leader? It has seemed to me that you have during your campaign suffered for the want of an officer in command of cavalry, whose judgment and dash could both be relied on. I could send you General Ayres, who, I believe, would make a capital commander and know him to be one of our best officers in other capacities.[1]

To this Sherman replied on the 23rd:

I do want very much a good cavalry officer to command, and have been maneuvering three months to get Mower here, but Canby has him up White River. My present cavalry need infantry guards and pickets, and it is hard to get them within ten miles of the front. If you think Ayres will do I would like him. Romeyn B. Ayres is, or was, as bad a growler as Granger. I would prefer Gregg or Wilson, anybody with proper rank will be better than Garrard. Kilpatrick is well enough for small scouts, but I do want a man of sense and courage to manage my cavalry, and will take any one that you have tried.[2]

The subject was evidently now uppermost in Grant's mind, and on the 25th he wired Meade:

Has Gregg returned yet? I will have to send a cavalry commander to Sherman and think of sending Gregg. At present, and to this time, there has not been an officer with the cavalry in the west whom it was safe to trust, without infantry to guard them from danger. The rebels

[1] O. R. Serial No. 78, p. 438.
[2] O. R. Serial No. 98, p. 442.

are equally badly off. With either Gregg, Torbert, or Wilson in command of Sherman's cavalry, they could travel over that western country with impunity.[1]

To this Meade replied the same day:

General Gregg has returned. In reference to your proposition to send him west, I have to call your attention to the fact that there is no other general officer of cavalry with this army but General Davies, one of the youngest and most recently promoted, whereas with General Sheridan's army are Torbert, Merritt, Custer, Devin, Chapman, and McIntosh.[2]

Why General Meade left my name out of the list, whether for reasons complimentary or otherwise, I have no means of knowing, nor did it make any difference in the result. Although there is no dispatch in the files from Grant to Sheridan covering the subject, it is yet certain that there was such a telegram, authorizing and instructing the latter to send either Torbert or myself, and as stated at the close of the last chapter, on consultation between Sheridan, Torbert, and myself, the honor with the burden and the risk fell to me. In his reply to Grant Oct. 1, 1864, at 10 A. M., Sheridan was good enough to do so in the following terms.

I have ordered General Wilson to report to Sherman. He is the best man for the position.[3]

He had already issued Special Order No. 44, of September 30:

In compliance with instructions from the lieutenant general commanding, Brig. Gen. J. H. Wilson is hereby re-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 98, p. 1008.
[2] *Ib.*, 1008.
[3] O. R. Serial No. 91, p. 249.

lieved from duty with the Third Cavalry Division, and will report without delay to Major General Sherman, commanding Military Division of the Mississippi, as chief of cavalry.[1]

The Lieutenant General lost no time in confirming the detail, and on October 4, at 11.30 A. M., wired Stanton:

General Wilson has been selected to go west to command Sherman's cavalry. As he is junior to the officers now serving with it, I would respectfully request that he be brevetted a major general and assigned to duty with that rank.[2]

Both requests, anticipating my wishes as expressed in a telegram to Rawlins of the same date,[3] were promptly complied with on October 5 by the War Department in Special Orders No. 333:

By direction of the President, Bvt. Maj. Gen. James H. Wilson, U. S. Volunteers, is assigned to duty according to his brevet rank, in the armies now serving under Major General Sherman, U. S. Army.[4]

And then, as if to weight me with a great sense of responsibility and to stimulate my efforts to the utmost, Grant sent a telegram to Sherman, October 4, 1864, and at its close paid me the greatest compliment of my life:

General Wilson has been ordered to report to you and, that he may have rank to command your cavalry, I have asked that he be brevetted a major general and assigned with that rank. I believe Wilson will add fifty per cent. to the effectiveness of your cavalry.[5]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 91, p. 218.
[2] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 63.
[3] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 104.
[4] O. R. Serial No. 79, pp. 714-753.
[5] *Ib.*, pp. 358, 429.

Perhaps if I had known what was expected of me when I left camp at Harrisonburg for my new field of duty and responsibility on that bright morning of October 2, 1864, I should not have gone with a heart so buoyant. When I recall now that there were "present and absent" on the rolls of the seventy-two regiments, which were to constitute my new command, nominally the large force of about fifty thousand men, and that there were actually less than ten thousand with the colors, the difficulty of the task of reorganizing this widely scattered mass into an efficient fighting force, strong enough and compact enough to take the field against Forrest, Wheeler, Buford, Jackson, Chalmers, Armstrong, Roddy, Lyon, and Rucker with any certainty of success would have been distressingly apparent. To reach with any reasonable certainty the high mark set for me by General Grant or to add fifty per cent. to the effectiveness of even ten thousand men would have been a task worthy of any young soldier's highest ambition. It was, doubtless, well to leave me free and of good heart for the responsibilities and burden of each day as they presented themselves.

My ride down the valley was romantic and interesting and, fortunately, was without accident or delay. Most of the route was infested by Mosby's scouts and bushwackers, who had lately killed or captured several of our officers, but my escort was strong enough to make an attack hazardous. I slept at Winchester the first night, where I met Rodenbough of the regular cavalry, Ludington, my quartermaster, and Taggart, my commissary. I reached Martinburg at noon the next day[1] and took the

[1] O. R. Serial No. 91, p. 271, Neill to Halleck.

train for Washington, arriving there that night. I spent the 4th at the War Department with Assistant Secretary Dana and Colonel Martin, who that afternoon turned over to me a dapple gray gelding of fine form, fire, and action, which they had selected from the Government stables for my special use. Because of his blazing black eyes and his extraordinary spirit, I named him "Sheridan," and sent him with the "Waif" by rail to Nashville. The journey lasted several days during which it was impossible for the horses to lie down, and on arriving at Louisville, as soon as they struck the ground "Sheridan" ran away in mere exuberance of feeling, in spite of all his groom could do to prevent it. He, however, kept pretty well in sight and wound up with his rider at the railway station where he was duly entrained with the rest for Nashville. I rode him thenceforth in turn throughout the Hood campaign. While in camp at Gravelly Springs most of the hard work fell upon him, and on more than one occasion he covered the mud road between headquarters and Waterloo Landing, a distance of twelve miles, in fifty minutes without turning a hair. During that winter I discovered his great powers of endurance and his extraordinary capacity as a high jumper. Although he had been badly handled and was both impatient and headstrong, he was absolutely without vice, and soon became noted for his docility as well as for his beautiful behavior on parade. He naturally loved action, military music, and pageantry, and had no idea of fear, and it was for these qualities no less than for his showy appearance that I rode him in the decisive charge at Selma, where he received a mortal wound from

which he died at Macon nearly three weeks later.

I was still the junior brigadier of both the Eastern and Western Armies and, although the President had hastened to assign me to duty under my brevet rank, it was apparent that my new and much greater command would bring me in contact with many officers who would more or less openly resent my selection for so great a command. It was on this account that the President issued his order of October 5, 1864.

I had already reached certain conclusions, not only from the study of military history, but from observation in the field, as to the proper functions of cavalry and the necessity of handling it in masses against the enemy's front, flanks, and communications, and this made it quite sure that the responsibility as well as a large part of the credit would be mine, as will more fully appear in the following narrative. Obviously, I owed the opportunity which the new detail brought me largely to General Grant's impressions while serving with him in the close and intimate relations of the two great campaigns of Vicksburg and Chattanooga. Those good impressions had doubtless been strengthened by my administration of the Cavalry Bureau as well as by my experience with the Third Cavalry Division in the Virginia campaigns. It was perhaps known to him that a prejudice existed against me on the part of those who had been overslaughed by my assignment to that command, but this strengthened rather than weakened me with him for the simple reason that he was not only responsible for it, but subject to a similar criticism from those he had superseded in still higher command.

The fact is, that no fixed rule had yet been established for the selection of generals or for their assignment to command. The rule of seniority which works well enough in times of peace, as might have been expected, was found to be entirely inapplicable in a great war following a long peace, and was specially so in the War for the Union. Selection was the inevitable alternative, but that was by no means simple in its application. Whether the initiative should be exercised by the President or Secretary of War, who were the real appointing power under the law, but who were always more or less accessible to the politicians and place hunters, or by the generals in the field, remained to the end unsettled and largely a matter of chance. Unusual liberty was allowed Grant after he became lieutenant general and yet there was necessarily, even in his selections, a large personal element based upon his own observation and judgment, which could not be brought within any fixed rule.

It was also true that the organization and management of our armies in the field, and especially of the various branches of the service in their relations to each other, had not yet been systematized. Certain general principles were observed and certain units were established, but the actual practice in the field and the daily use and inter-relation of the different arms were neither well settled nor uniformly applied. The generals were neither educated alike nor had they the same experience. Each had his own ideas and each applied them to suit himself, according to the exigencies of the case as he saw them.

It is well known that with all his experience the

aged and patriotic Scott, who was general-in-chief when the war broke out, steadily set his face against calling volunteer cavalry into the field, because, as he alleged, the war would be over before cavalry could be organized and properly trained for service. Months of valuable time were wasted before this idea was overthrown and effective measures taken to raise mounted troops. Even then but few regular officers were permitted to take a hand in that work. "Chiefs of cavalry," so-called, were appointed in due course at each department or army headquarters, but no fixed rule was prescribed defining their duties or authority. While they were generally selected for their experience and good standing in the Old Army, they were in most cases left to decide their own functions and duties, and, especially, to determine for themselves how far and in what cases they would exercise actual command. This naturally tended to make them ornamental staff officers rather than cavalry leaders, and this tendency was still further developed by the fact that but few of them had any definite ideas as to how the cavalry regiments should be brigaded and formed into divisions and army corps, or how they should be handled in coöperation with the other arms. Whether the cavalry should be used mainly as orderlies, escorts, and scouts, as was too long the practice, or what part of it should be so used and what part of it should be kept in readiness as a fighting force continued to be till the end of the war largely a matter of chance. Whether the brigades and divisions should be sent out separately on eccentric movements, or collected into masses and used in coöperation with infantry on the enemy's flanks,

rear, and communications, or alone in well-timed independent operations against his interior depots, arsenals, factories, railroads, and bridges, always remained more or less an open question.

Fortunately, I had acquired definite and fixed ideas on all these subjects and still more fortunately, in spite of sharp criticism on the part of Halleck, the chief-of-staff, and of Stanton, the secretary of war, I was permitted, during the Nashville campaign, as far as our resources would allow, to carry them into effect. Through Grant's special intercession, in at least one important instance, I was to have a free hand with the largest latitude of an independent commander, while through Sherman's authority, I was permitted to call in all outlying details and detachments and to organize a separate army corps which should include all the mounted troops of the four departments, constituting his military division.

I started for my new field of duty on the day I received my new assignment by the way of Baltimore, Wilmington, and Philadelphia, where I had business or social engagements which required a few hours in each place. I arrived at Louisville early on October 9, and at once took train for Nashville. At Louisville an amusing incident took place. In those days each train was furnished with a car for the special accommodation of ladies, and, as it was somewhat more comfortable than the rest, officers always wanted to get seats in the special car, but this was difficult unless they had ladies with them. One of my staff, acquainted with a clever actress playing at Louisville, introduced me to her. This made it easy for me and the aid-de-camp carrying her boxes to enter the car with her, but the other

aids were promptly shut out, whereupon the quick-witted actress passed her band-box out through the window to another and this brought him promptly within the privileged group. He in turn passed the box out to the others until all had safely run the gantlet. The incident gave rise to a good deal of fun and made the journey to Nashville quite a gay and pleasant one.

From Nashville we pushed on through Chattanooga to Dalton, beyond which the railroad had been badly broken by Hood's advance. Here we took horse for Resaca and Kingston and, after a short railroad transit, pushed on through Rome to Sherman's headquarters at Gaylesville, west of the Coosa River in northeastern Alabama close to the state line. It will be recalled that after the occupation of Atlanta, Hood took the offensive, marching rapidly along the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad to the northwest for the purpose of breaking up Sherman's communications and invading middle Tennessee. Through Corse's gallantry his attack at Altoona failed, but, withal, he continued north through Resaca and Dalton to Tunnel Hill, whence he withdrew to Gadsden in northeastern Alabama.

This aggressive return was vigorous and exciting and, although Sherman had a large preponderance of force, he inflicted no material damage upon Hood. The fact is that he could neither overtake nor bring that wily and fleet-footed commander to an engagement. He, therefore, gave up the chase in disgust and when I joined him was full of the March to the Sea. This would leave Hood free to follow him or to invade middle Tennessee, subject only to such resistance as Thomas might make with

the Fourth Corps and such other organizations and detachments as might be available for that purpose. It was an interesting situation and I dropped in upon Sherman in the midst of his correspondence concerning it. I found him much perturbed by Hood's movements and the uncertainty of the future campaign, but firm in the conviction that his true policy was to "cut loose, break roads, and do irreparable damage, while Thomas should be left to take care of Hood and destroy him."

Sherman gave me a hearty welcome, and after a few questions asked me to draft the order organizing the "Cavalry Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi," putting me in command and empowering me to make such dispositions and arrangements as I might think best for getting the largest possible force into the field and inflicting the greatest possible amount of damage upon the enemy. He frankly declared his dissatisfaction with his previous chiefs of cavalry and cavalry commanders, as well as with the work which they had done. He evidently had but little confidence in that arm. He thought the Confederate generals, especially Forrest, had been far superior to his, and bluntly expressed his doubt as to what I could accomplish. He gave me full authority, however, with all the encouragement he could think of, and generously declared that he would not claim any part of the honors but would leave me the full credit of whatever success I might achieve.[1] Of course, this was most encouraging.

I had known Sherman intimately during the great campaigns of Vicksburg and Chattanooga and, although he was nearly twenty years my senior, he

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 443, Wilson to Rawlins, Oct. 26, 1864.

assumed no superiority on that account, but acted toward me with perfect cordiality and frankness. He was a man of wide experience, extensive reading, and high attainments, and was singularly brilliant and entertaining in conversation. He received me with the welcome of an old friend and at once gave me his entire confidence, during which he explained that he had intended to organize his available cavalry into three small divisions, but upon my representation that so far as I could make out he had enough regiments in the military division, if they could be got hold of, to make six, certainly, and perhaps seven, large divisions, he gave me *carte blanche* and bade me do the best I could, merely asking me to give Kilpatrick's division a full mount and a complete supply of ammunition, clothing, and other supplies, for the March to the Sea, while I should gather up the rest of the mounted and dismounted cavalry, wherever found, and help Thomas as best I could to defeat and destroy Hood.

It will be recalled that I succeeded Kilpatrick in command of the Third Cavalry Division, and was now to relieve him as chief of cavalry for the Army of the Tennessee. In asking me to outfit his division Sherman said with perfect frankness, but apparently without intending to disparage him: "I know Kilpatrick is a hell of a damned fool, but I want just that sort of a man to command my cavalry on this expedition." He explained many years afterwards that if he had used such language, which he could not recall, he had done it because he knew that that was what a good many of his officers were in the habit of calling Kilpatrick.[1]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 64, Grant to Sherman, Oct. 4.

In regard to my assignment, Sherman says:

> General Grant, in designating General Wilson to command my cavalry, predicted that he would by his personal activity increase the effect of that arm "fifty per cent.," and he advised that he should be sent south to do all that I had proposed to do with the main army, but I had not so much confidence in cavalry as he had and preferred to adhere to my original intention of going myself with a competent command.[1]

October 22 and the next seven days were full of interest and made a lasting impression on my mind. After supper Sherman dismissed his staff to their tents with the remark that he wanted "to talk with Wilson." The night was clear, fresh, and crisp, and this made the blazing camp fire in front of his tent most comfortable. Sherman was full of plans for the future. He had about given up hope of bringing Hood to battle and was content to leave him to the care of General Thomas, although he did not seem to have any clear idea of the troops Thomas would be able to gather, how long it would take, or when they would be able to confront the enemy. He had selected the flower of his three armies, amounting to about sixty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, with plenty of artillery, all under his favorite leaders, for his own column, but strangely enough, when we began our conversation, his mind had not fully settled on the route he should take. He was clear that he should "march to the sea," but whether it should be to Pensacola,

[1] "Personal Memoirs of General William T. Sherman", third edition, Vol. II, pp. 159 *et seq.* Also O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 202, Grant to Sherman, Oct. 11.

Apalachicola, Old Fort Meyers, or the mouth of the Chattahoochee, on the Gulf of Mexico, rather than to Brunswick or Savannah on the Atlantic,[1] seemed far from settled. I pointed out that a march to any point on the Gulf of Mexico, however far to the east, would take him away from the Confederate armies in the field and out of his true theater of operations almost as completely as would a march to Lake Erie or Lake Michigan. This seemed to stagger him but he looked at the proposition from every possible point before he finally decided in favor of the South Atlantic coast. While the latter lay in the proper direction and promised much better results, I suggested that he would probably find the country of central and eastern Georgia provided with ample supplies and, unless defended by a much more formidable force than was then in that region, he need not go to the coast at all, but would find it much better to pass through Augusta on the interior short line toward Grant's army in Virginia. I called special attention to the fact that Hood was then near the Tennessee border and could hardly overtake him, no matter what direction he might take. While he admitted all that and finally settled down on going to the South Atlantic seaboard, he did not at that time, nor so long as I remained with him, say definitely what his objective point would be.

And it is now well known that he met with no effective resistance, but had a picnic excursion, living on the fat of the land, going to Brunswick first, and finally to Savannah. In this he lost much valuable time, which the enemy improved by collecting

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, Sherman to Grant, Oct. 11; also *Ib.*, p. 365, Sherman to Thomas, Oct. 19.

the remnants of Hood's defeated army from Tennessee, and, uniting it with all the other Confederate troops they could find outside of Lee's army, confronted the invaders in the Carolinas with a perfection of strategy and a boldness of determination which, like Hood's movement against Nashville, lacked nothing but weight to give it a complete victory.

During our discussion, which extended far beyond midnight, I developed my views in regard to collecting, massing, and remounting the cavalry, and giving them magazine rifles and carbines, all of which he fully approved. He not only gave me every encouragement, but directed me to return to Nashville, where I could more readily carry out my plans and more fully coöperate with Thomas in the work of destroying Hood. With that job done—and he seemed to have no doubt of our success—he forcibly suggested that I should bring the Cavalry Corps at its greatest possible strength through the middle of the Confederacy, and join him in Virginia for the final conflict with Lee and his army. This was a splendid program, but, as will be seen, was carried out only in part, for the simple reason that the *débâcle* came sooner than was expected.

During the memorable night at Gaylesville Sherman asked many questions about Grant, the condition of his army, and the progress he was making toward finishing the great work before him in Virginia. He commented freely on Grant's delays and disappointments, and while he acknowledged the importance of Sheridan's victories in the Valley, he felt that the deadlock in south Virginia would last till his own army could reënforce Grant's in front

of Petersburg. He also commented freely on the strong as well as the weak points of Grant's character and in the midst of the conversation looked up suddenly, with the glow of the camp fire on his deeply marked features and exclaimed: "Wilson, I am a damned sight smarter man than Grant; I know a great deal more about war, military history, strategy, and grand tactics than he does; I know more about organization, supply, and administration and about everything else than he does; but I'll tell you where he beats me and where he beats the world. He don't care a damn for what the enemy does out of his sight, but it scares me like hell!" He added: "I am more nervous than he is. I am more likely to change my orders or to countermarch my command than he is. He uses such information as he has according to his best judgment; he issues his orders and does his level best to carry them out without much reference to what is going on about him and, so far, experience seems to have fully justified him."

This was an acute and just analysis of the temperament and character of the two men, and I have quoted it more or less completely many times. While Sherman was in many ways much more brilliant than Grant, those who knew both will have long since settled down to the conclusion that Grant was a far saner and safer general than Sherman.

Sherman's mind was, however, at that time wholly absorbed in the proposed "March to the Sea" and supporting it he insisted that it would not only make "Georgia howl,"[1] as it surely did, but that it would also draw Hood after him, which it

[1] O. R. Serial No. 69, p. 162, Sherman to Grant, Oct. 9, 1864.

certainly did not. Grant was slow in yielding to Sherman's arguments in favor of marching away, leaving Hood's veteran army behind him, free to work its will, except as Thomas might confront it with a superior force hastily improvised from widely scattered fragments. Grant regarded the march through Georgia at that time merely as a cavalry proposition, claiming that "Hood would probably strike for Nashville," which he did as soon as he could gather supplies and ammunition for the campaign. Grant finally gave his consent to Sherman's march not only with hesitation, but on the imperative condition that Thomas should be left strong enough to hold firmly the line of the Tennessee. It is worthy of note that his position in this instance was not weakened by the fact that it had Rawlins' strong support throughout. It is also worthy of note that Grant ended his dispatch by a final suggestion in my behalf: "With Wilson turned loose with all your cavalry, you will find the rebels put much more on the defensive than heretofore."[1]

Although Sherman had conducted a successful campaign against Atlanta, he had signally failed to defeat or neutralize Hood's army. In fact, with all his battles he had never gained a complete victory, while Grant had to his credit the capture of Forts Henry and Donelson, the campaign and capture of Vicksburg, the victory of Missionary Ridge and was destined, above all, without any direct help from Sherman, to reap a final and overwhelming victory at Appomattox. Notwithstanding Sherman's blunt and searching criticism, it is greatly to the credit of both Grant and Sherman who were in some sense

[1] O. R. Serial No. 69, p. 202, Grant to Sherman, Oct. 11, 1864.

rivals, that they remained to the last firm and devoted friends. And yet there is something better than self-depreciation in Sherman's remark, made upon more than one occasion, that if it had not been for the death of Charles F. Smith, their old West Point commandant, "neither Grant nor he would have ever been heard of!"

It well illustrates Grant's real modesty that he never hesitated to say he regarded C. F. Smith as the finest soldier he had ever known and that, even after the fortunes of war had brought Smith under his command, he always felt like "assuming the position of a soldier" and standing at "attention" whenever he found himself in the presence of that knightly old hero. It is hard to decide which of those great men paid the finest compliment to C. F. Smith, but his gallant and successful assault at Fort Donelson showed that he deserved the unqualified admiration of both.

I employed myself at Gaylesville till October 26, inspecting the cavalry and making the acquaintance of its officers, perfecting the new organization, outfitting Kilpatrick's division, and sending the dismounted troops back to the depots at Nashville and Louisville for remounts and reëquipment.

It was during this interesting period that I met Kenner Garrard, whom I had succeeded a few months before as chief of the Cavalry Bureau. He was now commanding the Second Cavalry Division, Army of the Cumberland, and, although only a brigadier general, his rank in the regular army as well as his experience were so much greater than mine that I thought it might embarrass him to serve under me. Consequently I relieved him from further duty

in the cavalry and directed him to report to his army commander for an assignment to the infantry.

I also found George Stoneman, who had been the first corps commander of the Eastern Cavalry, and first chief of the Cavalry Bureau, holding the place of chief of cavalry to the Army of the Ohio. W. L. Elliott, an old cavalryman of high character, held the same title in the Army of the Cumberland, while General Grierson of the volunteers held a similar place in the Army of the Tennessee. They were all my seniors and, although my brevet and my assignment thereunder gave me an indisputable right to command them, I thought it best for all concerned that they should be disposed of as Garrard had been, and, as Sherman fully concurred, they were also relieved in turn from further service with the cavalry.

This important step gave me direct control over all the cavalry and its commanders, with no unnecessary links between me and them, and none of any kind between Sherman and myself, except such as grew out of the subsequent campaign. The March to the Sea necessarily separated us and brought me at once under the orders of Thomas, who was left in chief command at Nashville. Henceforth, all the mounted troops of the Military Division were absolutely under my control, all details and detachments were called in, and none were made thereafter except by my authority.

The effect was instantaneous. Every army commander and nearly every corps commander had a cavalry escort of greater or less size, while regiments, brigades, and divisions were scattered from east Tennessee to the Missouri River, with dis-

mounted men and convalescents at every hospital, depot, and camp from Chicago and St. Paul on the north to Vicksburg and Atlanta on the south. All these were promptly relieved and sent to their respective regiments; the regiments, when necessary, were assigned to brigades, and the brigades to divisions, while the divisions themselves were numbered consecutively in the corps and, as long as they were attached to it or were within reach, received their orders solely from or through the corps commander.

Inasmuch as there were seventy-two cavalry and mounted infantry regiments in the Military Division, sixty-one of which, not counting the Fourth Regulars, were incorporated in the cavalry corps, it was the largest cavalry organization ever made on this continent. The nominal regimental strength was from a thousand to twelve hundred, while the number actually present with the colors was from four to six hundred men. It will be seen that even at the lowest average the force was an enormous one, which needed only to be got together, properly mounted, armed, equipped, and commanded to become an army of itself. Fortunately, all but eight Tennessee regiments were veterans of ripe experience. Excepting the Fourth Regulars, the Seventh, Ninth, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth Pennsylvania, the First Alabama, the Tenth and Twelfth Missouri, and six splendid Kentucky regiments, they were from the northwestern states and, it is safe to say, they were nearly all native Americans, and as a class no better men ever wore the nation's uniform or carried its colors to victory.

While at Gaylesville, and after returning to

Nashville, I wrote freely to Rawlins, Badeau, and Dana, giving them the state of affairs as I found it in Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee with my views as to the measures necessary to put the western cavalry in a proper state of efficiency. Of course, my letters to Rawlins and Badeau were intended for the information of General Grant, when they thought it advisable to submit them to him, while those to Dana were under similar conditions for the information of the War Department. A number of the letters are in my possession, but, as they refer to incidents or details which have long since lost their interest, I shall quote them only when necessary to give a contemporaneous touch to my narrative or to emphasize points of special interest.

Before going to my new command, I received the congratulations and good wishes of my army friends, but, with the exception of an occasional mention in an English newspaper, the press gave me a wide berth. I saw but few reporters in the East and none in the West. The cavalry service, although somewhat brilliant and romantic, was now settling down to methodical work and hard knocks, neither of which were greatly in favor with the reporters. Both officers and men, however, gave their cheerful help and, therefore, the new corps took shape much more rapidly than anyone out of the army ever dreamed of.

The Presidential election was now at hand and all branches of the service were deeply interested in the result. McClellan had been nominated by the Democrats and, although he had not fully accepted their platform, he had many friends among our generals. Lincoln had been renominated against the

wishes of many in high places, and had the opposition of all who thought him slow and irresolute. It was a time of extraordinary anxiety. The Northern states were unhappy over the campaign in Virginia. They wanted and badly needed military success and were apparently ready to support anyone who could give them success. Grant had been held at bay in front of Petersburg for five months, while Sherman had at least driven the enemy's next most formidable army back, and captured the great interior stronghold of Atlanta. This was fast making him a popular hero, and with his many accomplishments he could probably have had the nomination for the Presidency if he wanted it, but, like Grant, he was for Lincoln as the best possible candidate, and was utterly opposed to any candidate who could be classed as "a copperhead" or "a rebel sympathizer."[1] But neither the Presidential election nor my correspondence interfered with my work.

I spent the next three days with the cavalry in an expedition toward Blue Mountain, Alabama, durwhich I got acquainted with many of the officers, studied the bearing, behavior, equipment, and mounts of the men and gathered information about that part of the country, but, not meeting any considerable body of the enemy, I left the column and returned to Rome, at which place I arrived after nightfall on October 29. General Sherman with some hesitation finally concluded that I should not go on the March to the Sea, but should return to help Thomas dispose of Hood.[2] Accordingly, I

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 203, Sherman to Halleck, Oct. 11.

[2] O. R. Serial No. 79, pp. 365, 515, 577, 582, 595, 599, 600, 618, 666, 714, 718, 747.

started on the next day for Nashville by rail and, after some vicissitudes and delays, reached there a few days later. Before leaving Georgia, I fully outfitted Kilpatrick's [1] division by taking horses from the regiments left behind, and thus added largely to the dismounted force, which now constituted by far the largest part of my command. The task of collecting and remounting it and of supplying its deficiencies of arms and equipments, while watching and resisting the progress of an active invading army under a most aggressive leader, engaged my constant attention both night and day till the danger had culminated and passed.

For about three weeks my headquarters remained at Nashville, but as soon as news came that Hood had crossed the Tennessee and had begun his advance in real earnest, I hastened to the front and took personal command of all the mounted troops I could find for service against the enemy.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, pp. 479, 494 (Special Orders No. 3); 511, Wilson to Garrard, Oct. 30; 531, Wilson to Thomas, Oct. 31.

## II

## CAMPAIGN OF MIDDLE TENNESSEE AGAINST HOOD

Details of reorganization—Hood at Gadsden—Grant uneasy—Rawlins sends reënforcements from Missouri—Gathering and remounting cavalry—Hood's advance—Wilson takes the field—Columbia on the Duck River—Forrest turns position—Schofield retreats—Affair at Spring Hill—Victory at Franklin—Cavalry defeats Forrest—Interview with Schofield and Stanley—Retire to Nashville—Correspondence with Grant's headquarters—Impressing horses—Thomas approves and coöperates.

With headquarters at Nashville, I was in close touch with Thomas and his subordinate commanders. Up to that time the cavalry had been directly under the department commanders and their chiefs of cavalry and were scattered from southwestern Missouri to east Tennessee and northern Georgia. Many men were absent from the colors on detached service of various kinds which contributed but little to the progress of the war. Those at the depots, remount camps, and various headquarters were forgotten or looked upon as out of reach, but as soon as I got to Nashville, all this was changed. With full powers from Sherman and with the active and

sympathetic coöperation of Thomas, who was himself an old and distinguished cavalryman, the work of regeneration went forward from the start not only without obstruction, but with the cheerful support of every officer in the field. Infantrymen and cavalrymen alike gave their hearty approval. While the mounted troops had done perhaps as well as could be fairly expected under the old policy, their operations had been so lacking in coherence and method that they were generally inefficient and inconclusive and were, therefore, regarded with indifference, if not with contempt. Sherman's spicy but severe criticisms in his letter to Grant reflected the views generally held as to the cavalry arm throughout the West. It had in no instance played an important, much less a decisive, part either in campaign or battle and was, therefore, properly considered as a negligible factor in the western theater of war.

From the best information I could get there were seventy-two regiments of cavalry and mounted infantry in the Military Division, nominally about fifty thousand men,[1] of which one thousand and twenty-six officers and twenty-two thousand nine hundred and thirty-nine men were reported as present for duty. These were divided into three army corps, one of three divisions and two of two divisions each, and yet there were no late returns on file either at Sherman's or Thomas's headquarters. No one pretended to know how many men were actually with the colors nor how many horses were available or could be got together for service. Even the chiefs of cavalry were ignorant as to the number of

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 573, Abstract of Returns, Oct. 31, 1864.

mounted and dismounted men, the number and kind of arms, equipments, and remounts required, or where they were to be had. These matters under our military system were not within their control but were left solely to the supply departments, which were primarily controlled by the Secretary of War and the chiefs of bureaus. The officers in the field had no authority over army supplies of any kind until furnished for issue. The Ordnance Bureau supplied arms, ammunition, and horse equipments; the Quartermaster's Bureau furnished forage, remounts, wagons, clothing, harness, and camp equipage; while the Subsistence Bureau was by far the most efficient and, it is safe to say, no army was ever better supplied with food than ours. When regular supplies failed on account of distance or lack of transportation facilities, long before the war was half over, it came to be the custom for the troops to supply their wants by impressment from the enemy's country.

With the mounted troops scattered as they were over the entire theater of war in the Mississippi valley, they had, of course, lost many men, killed, wounded, and captured, but, as their engagements were nearly always at the outposts or on raids and expeditions far away from the center of operations, their performances were but little known and still less appreciated. They were hardly ever in camp long enough to make returns and rarely ever long enough to make requisitions. It is no slander now to say that the mounted service was looked upon as both futile and discreditable. The results accomplished were in many cases negligible, if not positively injurious. Indeed, it is but the simple

truth that the cavalry had come to be a scoff and a byword to the other branches of service. The derisive offer of a liberal reward for a dead cavalryman was just as fair in the West as the East and was heard too often to be regarded as either witty or agreeable. And yet wherever mounted men went this reward was vociferously shouted with the derisive cry: "Dismount and grab a root!" Even officers and couriers were not exempt from it. Where the cry originated or what its real significance was, unless to hug the ground behind a tree, has never been satisfactorily explained, but I first heard it in the Army of the Tennessee two years before. It subsequently spread to the other armies and always indicated disrespect and contempt. It is pleasant to add, however, that neither the reward for a dead cavalryman nor the cry of "grab a root" was ever heard in the East after the battle of Winchester nor in the West after the battle of Nashville. In both cases they disappeared as the cavalry came together in masses and began close coöperation with the other arms of service.

Fortunately for us, Hood lost a whole month at Gadsden, waiting for ammunition, supplies, and recruits, while Forrest was making a senseless raid toward the Cumberland River. It was this delay and this raid that justified Sherman in saying: "That devil, Forrest, is down about Johnsonville," and gave Thomas time to assemble all his forces for a sturdy defence.[1]

While still at Gaylesville I wrote Rawlins, the chief-of-staff, fully as to the situation which Sher-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 913, Hood to Davis, Nov. 12, 1864.

man would leave behind him.[1] I gave him a full account of the nominal cavalry force, of its inchoate organization, and of its diminished strength in the field. I pointed out that we had nearly fifty thousand men on paper, divided into seven divisions, with from seven to ten regiments each, and ought to have an aggregate of thirty thousand men, not less than twenty thousand of which should be actually in the saddle, but, as a matter of fact, we could not raise six thousand for actual service, on account of detachments and a lack of horses, arms, and equipments. I did all in my power to give him and General Grant an exact idea of our situation. I discussed the case in all its aspects, urging a policy of concentration as the only means of overcoming the enemy's cavalry and establishing the invincibility of our own. I showed that cavalry without horses was useless, that it was worthless for defense, and that its only power was in a vigorous offensive. I advocated its concentration south of the Tennessee and hurling it into the bowels of the Confederacy in such masses that the enemy could not drive them back, as he did Sooy Smith and Sturgis, the year before.

I indicated the organization I proposed to make, gave the names of the division commanders, and asked for the officers of experience that had been promised me from the Army of the Potomac. I made in addition a vigorous plea against subdividing Sherman's forces until Hood had been disposed of and in favor of concentrating both infantry and cavalry as the surest means of success. There can be no doubt that this letter thoroughly aroused Raw-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, pp. 442 *et seq.*, Wilson to Rawlins, Oct. 26, 1864.

lins's apprehensions as to the possibilities of a great disaster should Hood decide not to follow Sherman but to lead an aggressive campaign against Thomas in middle Tennessee. Perceiving that Sherman's absence at the coast would certainly leave Hood free to move against Thomas and that this movement of a veteran and undefeated army against our widely scattered detachments might be successful, Rawlins got Grant's permission to go to St. Louis in person, for the purpose of sending A. J. Smith with the Sixteenth Corps and such other infantry and cavalry as he could find in Missouri, to reënforce Thomas in middle Tennessee. But with all that forcible officer could do, the concentration made slow progress. A. J. Smith, although a veteran of approved enterprise, lost nearly a month in making his way to Nashville. Meanwhile, Thomas with two corps of infantry and not over five thousand mounted troops was in great peril. Had Hood advanced at once with his three corps of infantry and his cavalry in better condition than ever before, he must have overthrown Thomas and overrun both Tennessee and Kentucky.[1]

But Sherman, having given me full control, the cavalry reorganization under existing conditions proceeded slowly but surely, while the various widely scattered detachments, with their own horses and transportation, marched from Memphis and west Tennessee and took up their position in Hood's front along Shoal Creek, and thus became the nucleus of the best cavalry corps that had ever been organized in the West. Hatch with his efficient division was soon joined by Croxton, Capron, and Harrison with fairly good brigades, and the line thus formed gave

[1] O. R. Serial No. 77, pp. 590 *et seq.*

prompt notice of Hood's advance on November 19. Forrest having rejoined Hood, moved out with all his aggressive activity, through Florence and Lawrenceburg toward Pulaski. Born and brought up in the Duck River country, and having many Tennesseeans from the same district with him, Forrest was perfectly familiar with every river and creek, as well as with every turnpike and crossroad in that region. The direct route to Nashville was a broad, well-built turnpike, running due north through Columbia, Spring Hill, and Franklin, and although the weather was good, the streams still low, and the side roads dry and passable, it required no great knowledge of the country and but little military acumen to foresee that Hood would make his advance by that route. Our own movements, as well as his, were, therefore, clearly indicated from the start. Hood must naturally follow the turnpike because he could make better speed in that way. We were compelled to do the same, because if we left it we should necessarily lose both distance and time.

Long's division, formerly Garrard's, was the largest and best one in my command, but its remaining horses had been taken to complete Kilpatrick's remount and fit that division to go with Sherman, while the dismounted troopers were sent by rail to Louisville for fresh horses, and did not rejoin me in the field or take any part against Hood till the battle and campaign of Nashville were over.

It was, undoubtedly, a great misfortune that we were compelled to send this splendid division so far to the rear for remount, but when the orders were given, the railroad was so overtaxed with sup-

plies for Sherman that it could not carry horses to the south at all, while it was easy to carry the dismounted men by the returning empty trains to Nashville and the refitting depot at Louisville. It was the lack of sufficient rail transportation and the danger of interruption by water which account for much of the delay we experienced in concentrating both infantry and cavalry in front of Hood. While both armies were delayed and embarrassed by the lack of railroad facilities, it should be remembered that our railroads were better than the enemy's and that, having superior resources of every sort, we were finally enabled to concentrate our troops and give battle in time to gain one of the most overwhelming victories of the entire war.

As the campaign developed, the places in which there seemed to be the greatest doubt as to the actual condition of affairs, accompanied by the least hope of a favorable outcome, were the War Department and Grant's headquarters. While Sherman's columns were lost to view, in the Georgia lowlands and Grant's own army was at a deadlock with Lee's, both Grant and Stanton became filled with undue anxiety and impatience as to Thomas and his movements. They thought him slow, and did not hesitate first to criticise and then to issue positive and ill-considered orders to fight, when the conditions were still highly unfavorable.

While Hood was advancing from the Tennessee and I had nominally six divisions of cavalry, my actual force with the colors in front of Hood did not exceed five thousand fighting men. Until the movement began I remained at Nashville, engaged night and day in perfecting the paper work, in gathering

horses, arms, and equipments, and in making ready for the campaign which was soon to burst upon us. Generally, the supply departments responded promptly to my call, but horses, our greatest want, were scarce, and with the higher requirements and closer inspections I had myself prescribed a few months before, and the advance in price which had naturally followed the advance in quality, the western horse contractors found it impossible to supply our demands. The War Department itself seemed to despair, and while Stanton appeared willing to do what he could, he finally lost patience and his good sense besides, and telegraphed Thomas that if he waited for Wilson to remount his cavalry he would wait "till the crack of doom." But as this was after I had asked and he had granted permission to impress horses from the people wherever they could be found south of the Ohio River, his pessimistic assertion was shortly shown to be both unjust and unfounded.

This arbitrary measure was entirely without precedent within our lines, but it was carried ruthlessly into effect while the contending armies were facing each other in front of Nashville. Within seven days after the Secretary's authority came to hand seven thousand horses were obtained in middle and western Kentucky and our mounted force was thereby increased to twelve thousand, nine thousand of which were actually assembled at Edgefield or within supporting distance. The quartermasters to whom this duty was assigned gave vouchers in proper form for every horse taken and it is believed that no permanent loss or injury was inflicted upon the loyal people. Every horse and mare that could

be used was taken. All street-car and livery stable horses, and private carriage- and saddle-horses, were seized. Even Andrew Johnson, the vice-president-elect, was forced to give up his pair. A circus then at Nashville lost everything except its ponies; even the old white trick horse was taken but it is alleged that the young and handsome equestrienne, who claimed him, succeeded in convincing my adjutant general that the horse was unfit for cavalry service. Be this as it may, a clean sweep was made of every animal that could carry a cavalryman and the result is shown by the fact that although two brigades of three thousand men were sent to Kentucky in pursuit of Lyon's Confederate cavalry, about ten thousand well mounted men crossed the Cumberland on the night of December 12 and marched out against the enemy on the morning of the 15th, as soon as the thaw made it possible to move at all. The great victory which resulted from turning the enemy's flank shows how important the measure was in making the cavalry the tremendous factor it became, not only in that battle but in the campaign which wound up the war.

Meanwhile on November 21, at 9:30 P. M., I left Nashville by train and at 2 A. M. the next day reached Lynnville, sixty-three miles south of Nashville. There I took horse for the front and met Schofield four miles north of Pulaski, whence he was retiring with the bulk of our forces. He was not the senior general at that time in the field but had the Fourth Corps under the veteran Stanley, who ranked him and the Twenty-third under Cox—in all about twenty-five thousand men. Schofield, commanding an army and department, had precedence over Stanley,

who was but a corps commander by assignment.[1] After a short conference, we returned together to Lynnville where I soon got in touch with the various parts of my command covering the enemy's front. In the afternoon I rode to Campbellsville, a small village and road-center to the west, and after learning that the enemy had not made his appearance in that quarter I rejoined Schofield at Lynnville, and early the next morning with the rear guard retired to Columbia, a considerable town on the Duck River.[2]

On my way back I took station on a railroad embankment to inspect Croxton's brigade, mostly Kentuckians, as it passed to the rear. It so turned out that the Eighth Michigan Veteran Cavalry, of excellent reputation, well mounted and equipped, had the head of the column, but much to my surprise the regiment itself was headed by a well mounted and well clad woman riding with the field and staff as though she belonged there. As this was an unusual sight in an actual campaign, I turned to Croxton nearby and asked who the lady was. The General with a meaning smile said: "Oh, that is Mrs. Colonel Smith commanding the Eighth Michigan Cavalry." In further explanation he added that she had been with the regiment some time and seemed to be quite at home, whereupon I said with all necessary firmness: "General, please send my compliments to 'Mrs. Colonel Smith' with an order relieving her from further service in the field, and directing her to take the first train back to Nash-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, pp. 638, Special Field Orders No. 302; 666, Thomas to Halleck; 685, Halleck to Thomas; see also p. 703.

[2] O. R. Serial No. 93, p. 995, Schofield to Thomas, Nov. 23, 1864.

ville." Thereupon a broader smile lighted the General's face as well as the faces of his staff, as he said to an aid-de-camp: "You have heard the General's orders. Please deliver them to Mrs. Colonel Smith and see that they are promptly obeyed."

This episode, small as it was, made a favorable impression on all present, as well as upon the officers and men of the regiment, for the next day the field and staff called formally to pay their respects to the new commander. Of course, no allusion was made to the order sending the Colonel's wife to the rear, but that it was heartily approved was shown by the cordiality of all who took part in the visit. The day after, however, I received a note from the lady protesting against my action, and asking, inasmuch as both Sherman and Thomas had permitted her to accompany the regiment, that I should at least withdraw my order till the campaign then on was ended. Of course, I remained obdurate, but did my best to soften the blow by the assurance that I had not intended to cast the slightest reflection upon her courage.

The whole of our infantry and artillery was gathered and strongly entrenched at Columbia by November 24, but Hood did not make his appearance in force till two days later. Meanwhile, I posted the cavalry on the north bank of the Duck River, watching the fords and roads above and below the town for twenty-five miles. The entire cavalry present for duty was four thousand five hundred men, while in front of us Forrest had three divisions estimated at from eight thousand to ten thousand men in the saddle.

A slight breathing spell followed till the 27th,

when most of the infantry was withdrawn to the north side of the river for the better defense of the crossings against the enemy. It soon became evident, from the caution with which he moved, that Hood would not throw his main force against Columbia, but, using the fords above, would strike across the country toward Spring Hill and Franklin on the railroad in the rear. Communication with Thomas at Nashville was slow and uncertain and Schofield alleges that this was partly due to the fact that his cipher telegraph operator had deserted and gone back to Franklin. Be this as it may, I took the precaution to send a courier to Thomas with a copy of every dispatch, sent directly to Schofield. In this way the Generalissimo was fully informed of all important movements at the front. We were daily expecting the Sixteenth Corps from Nashville with such other reënforcements as might be gathered, but it so turned out that Smith was delayed and did not form a junction with the army till it was safely within the defenses of Nashville a few days later. The greatest peril on the Duck River was due to the fact that our forces might be caught napping while the enemy made a rapid march around our flank to the rear and threw himself upon our communications at one or the other of the points left uncovered, and this is exactly what he undertook to do. Having posted my command on the road from Columbia to the Lewisburg turnpike, north of the river, I was in position to obtain prompt information from the outposts and pickets watching the fords.

On Monday, November 28, it was certain that we could no longer hold Columbia, which had become an important depot not only for the quartermasters

and commissaries, but for the sutlers. The latter had gathered a considerable quantity of officers' supplies and when it became certain that they would have to get back, they gave away such as they could not otherwise dispose of, and a demijohn of whiskey fell to my staff who received it without making the fact known. My standing orders absolutely forbade all officers from having liquor in their possession. Even the doctors were discouraged from keeping it in stock except for necessary medical purposes. The next day, as headquarters with the Fourth Regular Cavalry were marching to the Lewisburg turnpike, one of the staff much to my surprise showed by an incoherent speech that he had been drinking. This was the first notice I had, and turning in my saddle I saw a sergeant carrying a demijohn resting upon his thigh almost tall enough to reach his shoulder. Asking what he had, he answered: "Whiskey, sir!" Thereupon I told him to dash it down, and this he did with a cheerful "Aye, aye, sir," just as the column was passing down the slope of a hill where the stone was laid bare. The crash and jingle of the glass, audible to the entire staff, was followed by frowns and by silence which were ominous, but it was soon evident that there was no more liquor left in the column. We had plenty of hard work all that night and the next day and for several days afterward and while the officers scarcely spoke to me, no more incoherent orders were heard. This incident impressed me with the belief that no matter how great the exposure or how hard the work, strong drink affords no protection or benefit in either case. We frequently laughed about the broken demijohn afterward, and all admitted that my action was

justifiable and that the rule on which it was based was a good one. The simple fact is, that all kinds of ardent spirits are absolutely harmful to officers and men on active duty and are of questionable value even in the hospital.

Schofield, the actual commander at the front, many years afterward wrote an elaborate justification of his own course and a sharp criticism of Thomas's. He blamed the latter for not making his headquarters with the troops in the field, for not concentrating his available forces more rapidly, for not bridging the Harpeth River in the rear, and for leaving him without positive instructions as to the course he should pursue. The truth is that Thomas did exactly right in remaining at Nashville till his entire army was concentrated and ready to assume the offensive. Nashville was the center of rail, river, and telegraphic communication for that entire theater of war. It was also the principal national depot south of the Ohio and it was clearly Thomas's duty to make that place secure against every possible attack, and to this end he could the more properly devote himself, because he had in Schofield and Stanley at the front, two major generals of ability and reputation. Manifestly the most important work for him was to gather all the available forces into a single and compact army and to avoid a general engagement till that was accomplished. Whatver may have been Thomas's orders or suggestions, it was clearly Schofield's first duty, while impeding the progress of Hood as much as practicable, to incur no great risk and to accept no general engagements, except from behind fortifications, till Thomas could either take the field with all

his reënforcements or till Schofield himself should be forced back to Nashville. In violating these fundamental principles in face of full information, Schofield lost at least twelve hours in getting out of Columbia after he knew that Hood had crossed Duck River above and was marching on Spring Hill. In endeavoring to justify this loss of time, both he and Cox made elaborate explanations which did not explain.[1]

It was a period of great activity and of great anxiety from the time we left Columbia till we reached Nashville. Since we had passed three days and nights in ceaseless marching and fighting, assailed by Hood, one of the most aggressive of the Confederate generals, with an army of veterans, aided by such leaders as Forrest, Cheatham, Stephen D. Lee, Stewart, Cleburne, and Walthall, it was of vital importance that no mistake should be made and that no time should be lost in reaching the important points on the line of retreat. Neither Thomas, A. J. Smith, nor Steedman was at hand and, therefore, it should have been plain sailing for Schofield, without exposing any part of his command to defeat or disaster. The turnpikes were all in his possession and the Harpeth River fordable at many places but, withal, he tarried at Columbia south of Duck River till Hood's advance guard had attacked a part of his forces twelve miles in the rear.

At noon on November 28, the cavalry pickets

[1] Schofield's "Forty-six Years in the Army," pp. 170-225; "The March to the Sea, Franklin and Nashville," by Jacob D. Cox, pp. 66-80; "The Battle of Franklin," by Jacob D. Cox, pp. 21 *et seq.*

gave notice of the appearance of the rebel cavalry at various fords and particularly at Huey's Mill, four or five miles above Columbia, in such force as to leave no doubt of their intentions to cross. Shortly afterward our pickets and supporting detachments were driven in, while Forrest began laying a bridge and crossing by the ford at the mill. At 2:10 P. M. I sent a dispatch to Schofield informing him of the enemy's movements and of my intention to concentrate the cavalry at the junction of the east and west road with the Lewisburg turnpike. In the same dispatch I requested him to send one of my outlying brigades by way of Spring Hill to reënforce me on the fighting flank of the army. At 7 P. M., after much skirmishing and rapid marching, I had my entire force, with the exception of this brigade, in hand at the crossroads with a strong detachment holding on till after nightfall at the crossing of the turnpike and the Duck River five miles south of us. Thus I was in safe control of one turnpike while the other was occupied by Schofield's infantry with nothing to oppose or delay its orderly retirement in the direction of Franklin. This was obviously the best possible condition for the army at the front for it left the well covered broad turnpikes for our use, while it forced the enemy to move on the mud roads between the two turnpikes. It is a curious fact, however, that Schofield, as though he doubted the accuracy of my information, instead of beginning his march to the rear, sent a brigade, as he alleges, to verify my report, while he himself held on in the neighborhood of Columbia, if not actually in the town, which was exactly what his opponent wanted him to do.

During the night my men captured a number of prisoners and brought them to headquarters, where I promptly examined them with the result that the previous information was fully verified. It was also ascertained beyond doubt that Forrest's cavalry, consisting of Chalmers's, Jackson's, Buford's, and a part of Roddy's divisions, with Biffle's regiment acting as Forrest's escort, had already crossed the river at Huey's Mill and that a large part of Hood's infantry was following by the same route. Feeling sure that this information was correct, I suggested in my dispatch dated 1 A. M. November 29, which I took the precaution of sending by several different couriers on different routes, that Schofield should reach Spring Hill by 10 A. M. because, according to my calculations, Hood with his advance could easily reach there by noon.[1] I warned Schofield, who got the first copy of my dispatch at 2 A. M. and the second later, that there was not an hour to lose, but instead of moving promptly with the whole of his forces he ordered Stanley with one division to Spring Hill to take position at that place covering the railway and country roads passing through it.

Stanley, who was no sluggard, moved promptly, reached his destination in time and with admirable judgment occupied a position from which he was enabled to foil every movement of Hood, whose advance guard made its appearance at noon of that day as I had predicted. But Schofield still held on, and, according to his own narrative, did not begin his march to the rear till late in the afternoon of the 29th. Fortunately, the turnpike was not

[1] O. R. Serial No. 930, p. 1143, Wilson to Schofield, Nov. 29, 1 A. M.; also, p. 1144, Schofield to Wilson, Nov. 29, 8 A. M.

only smooth and broad, but the enemy did not reach or cross it from the fords and the southeast, although his main body bivouacked in sight of it and remained there throughout the night, while Schofield's delayed columns, under cover of darkness, marched within gun-shot and hearing distance of the sleeping rebels. That Hood understood the real situation is shown by his own interesting narrative published fifteen years later. His plan was brilliant, and so obviously proper that Schofield should have divined it from the start.[1] It was, briefly, to throw his cavalry, followed by two corps of infantry, across Duck River between the two turnpikes and to march by the dirt roads rapidly to Spring Hill, while Lee with his remaining corps, should hold Schofield with the bulk of his army in front of Columbia. By half past seven Hood, closely followed by Cheatham and Stewart, had crossed at Huey's Mill, while a part of Forrest's corps was confronting me at Rally Hill, and the rest moving across country toward Spring Hill. Losing no time, Hood pushed forward by the mud roads, his advance guard reaching the neighborhood of Spring Hill by noon and his main body threatening Stanley at the village and overlooking the turnpike to the left. Manifestly, it was Hood's policy to strike the turnpike first and thus divide Stanley from Schofield's marching columns. For that purpose he claims to have ordered Cheatham in person before nightfall to throw his corps across the turnpike facing Schofield, but for some reason, never made entirely clear, Cheatham failed him. Doubtless, Stanley's entrenched position was a serious obstacle to the movement.

[1] "Advance and Retreat," by J. B. Hood, pp. 283 *et seq.*

Cheatham afterward asserted that he had positively ordered Stewart to prolong his line to the left but darkness settling down before anything could be done in that direction, all operations came to an end. Hood himself, with the instincts of an aggressive leader, seems to have realized that a great opportunity was slipping away, but with all his efforts he did not succeed in getting any part of his army to the turnpike, much less across it. Learning later that Schofield's column with its trains had not yet passed, but was hurrying along the turnpike from dark till midnight, he renewed his orders in writing, directing Cheatham this time to throw himself across the turnpike north of Spring Hill. Subsequent discussion makes it probable that this order reached Cheatham's adjutant general, who declares that he withheld it on his own responsibility and that Cheatham did not hear of it till after the Federal columns had safely passed beyond the danger of interception. It is an interesting circumstance, however, that when I returned to that neighborhood a few weeks later, I received what seemed to be reliable information that Cheatham, for a part of the night at least, was absent from his headquarters in the company of ladies at a nearby country house and did not hear of Hood's written order till after the great opportunity upon which it was based had passed.[1] It is worthy of note that certain Confederate writers discussing this question years afterward, set up the contention that Hood's plans upon this interesting occasion failed largely because his subordinates

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, p. 652, General Hood's Official Report to General S. Cooper; also, p. 657, General Hood to Seddon, Confederate Secretary of War.

lacked confidence in his capacity as an army commander. It will be recalled that Hood succeeded Joseph E. Johnston in command of that army by the orders of Jefferson Davis, as a result of Johnston's failure to stay Sherman's progress toward Atlanta, and that Hood up to that time held an inferior command. Although a soldier of great personal courage and prowess, there is no doubt that he was looked upon by his contemporaries as possessing but limited ability and lacking the necessary experience for the great responsibilities thus imposed upon him. It was customary in both the Confederate and Federal armies after his advancement to decry both his performances and his abilities, and this may account in some degree for the failure of his bold undertakings, but it has always seemed to me that they were ably planned and needed nothing but heavier battalions, greater resources, and better subordinates to make them successful.

Simultaneously with Hood's advance on Spring Hill, Forrest threw his cavalry against me at Rally Hill. Having given Schofield timely notice that I should keep my force together and hold on as long and as firmly as its strength would permit, I clung to the Lawrenceburg turnpike, as I always supposed, with his approval, as well as with Thomas's, hoping to get no further back that night than to the Ridge Meeting House abreast of Spring Hill. I understood that Schofield would unite his army at Spring Hill and hold that place till nightfall and that I would be in my proper position, as indicated, on the next turnpike facing the enemy's cavalry. Had he conformed to that idea, there need have been no serious fighting till both columns, then less

than four miles apart, were concentrated by the converging turnpikes at Franklin the next day. As it turned out, Forrest ceased his pressure against me late in the afternoon and, dividing his command, withdrew the greater part in the direction of Hood's main body near Spring Hill. Keeping the cavalry in a compact mass, it incurred no great loss or risk from that time till the end of the campaign. Hatch and Croxton, commanding the principal parts of the active forces, were officers of rare experience and self-reliance. Taking the rear by turns, during the first day they compelled Forrest to advance slowly and with caution. It was a heavily wooded country in which it was easy enough to hold chosen positions as long as necessary and then fall back to new ones on the turnpike, while the enemy was compelled to move through the woods in greater or less disorder. Hatch had the rear at first with Croxton so posted behind that when the time came Hatch could pass through and reform farther back. In order to encourage Croxton, I told him when his turn came, to hold the rear and fall back beyond Hatch, who would be close at hand ready to support him, whereupon Croxton asked quickly if I intended to fight, to which I answered: "Only when necessary to delay the enemy." At this, the self-reliant Kentuckian replied: "I think I understand you, and all I have to say is, if you don't intend to fight for all you are worth, please get your 'horse cavalry' out of the way and give me a clear road!" His perfect confidence in himself and his men was so clear from this remark that I felt no doubt our movements that day would be both deliberate and successful.

It is commonly supposed that it is one of the most difficult operations of war to cover a retreat successfully while retreatng yourself, but according to my observation there is nothing easier in a wooded country than "to get back" without haste or loss. It was a busy and exciting day during most of which my column was retiring or fighting. At Mount Carmel Church, five miles north of Hart's Crossroads, the enemy made two headlong charges on our fence-rail layout but were repulsed with severe loss. From that place back to Douglas Church, four miles from Franklin, our retreat was made with perfect order and deliberation. The enemy made no effort to disturb us but without our knowledge turned his attention entirely to Schofield's march. Even that he did not molest in the least, and it is now certain that, seeing the Federal columns could not be brought to bay till they were safely behind the entrenchments at Spring Hill, he dropped both entirely about that time and confined himself to a closer coöperation with the movement toward Franklin, and with Hood's final gallant but futile assaults upon the entrenchments of that place. I here call attention to the fact that during that bloody battle Forrest, acting strictly under Hood's instructions, divided his cavalry, sending Chalmer's strong division to the extreme left, while he kept the other two under his own personal command on the extreme right of Hood's line confronting me. Although we were separated by a fordable river, this division of Forrest's corps was a fatal mistake for, instead of driving me back and getting on Schofield's rear as he might have done with his whole corps, it made it easy for me not only to beat his two divi-

sions in actual battle but to drive them north of the river in confusion.

As Schofield's infantry was safely within the strong defenses of Franklin by an early hour on the 30th, I took position with my main body on his left along the river roads above him. The Harpeth, although of considerable width, was fordable at many places and this made it certain that any turning movement on Forrest's part would be above rather than below the town. This, however, did not prevent me from sending one small brigade down and one farther up the river toward Triune. To any one who will take the trouble to consult the map it will appear that this was the best possible arrangement of the cavalry, especially as I kept Croxton's brigade in its advanced position on the Lewisburg pike to the left and front of Franklin till the enemy had closed in upon that place and Forrest had taken position along the south bank of the river confronting my position and pickets.

It is not my purpose to describe the battle of Franklin. This has been done many times, with sufficient accuracy as far as the part performed by the infantry is concerned, but, inasmuch as the all-important services of the cavalry in connection with that battle have been habitually minimized, it is my duty to set forth the part played by them while Hood was hurling his masses with frenzied impetuosity against the entrenchments in his front.

Croxton's brigade became engaged at ten o'clock near Douglas Church on the Lewisburg turnpike, but successfully held its position till 2 P. M., when he was again pressed by Forrest, supported by infantry moving toward his left as if to turn his

flank and cross the river at Hughes' Ford. Regarding his position as merely one of observation, I withdrew him to the north side of the river at McGavock's Ford, but he had scarcely reached his new position when Hatch's pickets further up the river reported the enemy crossing at various places in his front.

The main body of my command under cover of night had unsaddled, groomed, and fed their horses and had taken a short rest, but were early under arms and ready to drive the rebels back if possible. I received no orders whatever from Schofield and, although within two miles and a half of his headquarters, I was left for the entire day to my own resources. Realizing, however, that it was important to drive Forrest back and to hold the line of the river intact until Schofield's infantry and artillery were safely out of Franklin, I lost no time in pushing all the troopers I could dismount sharply against the enemy. Naturally, we thought Forrest's entire force confronted us and, although we believed he outnumbered us two to one, we felt it still more imperative to hold him at bay, if possible. A fierce fight followed, lasting till nightfall, when every Confederate cavalryman had been driven across the river, and so closely were they pressed that they took the water wherever they came to it. Hatch, Coon, and Croxton handled their men with skill and determination. They were not only steady and courageous, but experienced soldiers who had been in such situations a hundred times before, but they fully understood from their own observations, as well as from my orders, which were frequently repeated, that success on our part was an impera-

tive necessity, and this feeling seemed to pervade every officer and man engaged in the affair.

This successful first battle between my cavalry and Forrest's was the best possible answer to Schofield's gratuitous assumption in his dispatch to Thomas on November 30, 1864, at 9:50 A. M.: "Wilson is entirely unable to cope with him." In a later message at 3 P. M., while my fight was in progress and before his own had begun at Franklin, in reply to a question from Thomas: "I should like to know what Wilson thinks he can do to aid in holding Hood," Schofield replied in a vein, still more pessimistic and unkind: "I will refer your question to General Wilson this evening. I think he can do very little. I have no doubt Forrest will be in my rear to-morrow or doing some greater mischief."

Fortunately, Schofield was more of a general than a prophet. By 5:30 P. M., after I had driven the enemy across the Harpeth at every point, he was tendering me "his compliments and thanks."[1]

In his report to Thomas, December 7, 1864, after crediting me with having successfully, although with a greatly inferior force, held Forrest in check until his trains and troops could reach Franklin, he adds:

> A short time before the infantry attack commenced the enemy's cavalry forced a crossing about three miles above Franklin, and drove back our cavalry, for a time seriously threatening our trains, which were accumulating on the north bank and moving toward Nashville. I sent General Wilson orders, which he had, however, anticipated, to drive the enemy back at all hazards and moved a brigade of General Woods's division to support him if necessary.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, pp. 1169, 1170, 1179, 1184.

At the moment of the first decisive repulse of the enemy's infantry I received the most gratifying intelligence that General Wilson had driven the rebel cavalry back across the river. This rendered my immediate left and rear secure for the time being. * * * * The enemy, having nearly double my force of infantry and quite double my cavalry, could easily turn any position I might take and seriuosly endangered my rear.[1]

If Schofield ever sent any such orders as those mentioned above they never reached me; as to the alleged support from a brigade of Woods's infantry, I never heard of it until my attention was called, long after, to the passage in the Official Report above set out. The simple fact is, that from the time I assumed active command in the field south of Columbia on November 22, 1864, until our imperiled army, with its trains intact, was safely within our fortified lines at Nashville, I was left almost entirely to my own resources. To whatever cause Schofield's contemptuous estimate of my command was due, whether to my comparative youth, or to a doubt of my capacity, or to the obvious inferiority of my force, it is certain that, thereafter, and especially at Nashville, he took a far kinder view of the fighting ability of the cavalry. Fortunately, I found lieutenants of rare ability and experience in Hatch and Croxton, who were ideal leaders of cavalry, the peers, if not the superiors of the vaunted Bufords, Chalmers, Jacksons, to whom they were opposed. Besides, their troops were hardy veterans worthy of such leadership and every man a host in himself. The assumption, so thoroughly exploded and in the end so fatal to the fond hopes of the Confederate

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, p. 343, Schofield's Official Report to Thomas.

oligarchy, that they were superior both in physical courage and leadership to the Northerners, was not only puerile to the last degree but never had the slightest foundation in fact.

In the glamour of the victory won at Franklin by the infantry, the country failed to notice the all-important, if less conspicuous, services of the cavalry in covering the retreat, in divining and giving timely notice of Hood's movements, and, finally, in defeating and driving back Forrest. Perhaps this was natural enough in view of the fact that these services received but scant recognition in the official reports. It is hardly too much to claim that the cavalry, of which so little was expected, saved Schofield's army from a great disaster both at Spring Hill and at Franklin, and such is my hope, will be the verdict of history. In spite of inexcusable errors, John Fiske accords that arm a fair share in the glories of Franklin:

> Meanwhile an important cavalry battle was fought on the farther side of the river. A large force of the enemy's cavalry, under Chalmers [Forrest], crossed from the Lewisburg pike with the design of operating upon the Federal connections northward; but Wilson met them with a superior force, and the afternoon was consumed in an obstinate battle, which ended in driving the whole rebel cavalry to the south side of the Harpeth.[1]

My grateful acknowledgments are also due for the following statement:

> The force which Sherman left behind for Thomas consisted of about five thousand cavalry now to be commanded by General James Harrison Wilson, whom Grant sent from

[1] "The Mississippi Valley in the Civil War," John Fiske, pp. 337, 343, 354-358.

Virginia with the message, "I believe he will add fifty per cent. to the effectiveness of your cavalry."

As before stated I received neither orders nor information from Schofield during the contest between him and Hood although I was not over two miles away. I heard heavy cannonading for much of that fateful afternoon, and was full of anxiety but not a man in the cavalry had any idea that a bloody battle was in progress. As soon as our own fight ended, however, my first duty, after sending Colonel Wharton to Schofield to report the result, was to collect and reform my troops, and strengthen the outposts and pickets at the river. With this done, I took a watchful attitude, fully prepared for a counter attack whenever it might come.

Fortunately, it was not the habit of the Confederates to do much night work, so that as soon as it was dark I put my main body in reserve, with orders to go into bivouac, unsaddle, feed, and rest, while I rode rapidly to Schofield's headquarters, which I found in a comfortable house inside a redoubt north of the river, some two miles or two miles and a half from the scene both of my engagement with Forrest and of Hood's assaults upon the defenses of Franklin. Schofield and Stanley were together and, after reporting the result of my fight with Forrest, I was greatly surprised to hear that a fierce battle had occurred between our infantry and Hood's army, that charge and countercharge had followed in rapid succession, that our works had been carried and recaptured, that deeds of extraordinary courage had characterized the fighting on both sides, that the enemy had been finally repulsed with the loss of many officers and men, and finally

that Stanley himself, while in the midst of the mêlée, had been shot through the back of the neck, but had retained his position on the field till all was safe. Stanley in his bloody coat, with his neck wrapped in bandages, was before me and the wonder was that he had escaped alive. Neither he nor Schofield seemed excited or disturbed to the slightest degree, but the latter was busy arranging to withdraw his army from the scene of its victory. This was in pursuance of orders received from Thomas before he knew of the fight when he thought it best to withdraw Schofield from the field and unite him with Smith and the garrison of Nashville, within the fortifications of the place. After explanation on both sides, Schofield thanked me and my command most cordially for the gallant and successful services we had rendered in driving back the enemy's cavalry and maintaining the line of the river intact. He added: "If you had not succeeded in doing that, our victory here would have been in vain, for with Forrest upon our flanks and rear it would have been impossible for us to have withdrawn our train, artillery, and troops from this position." To emphasize his statement he frankly continued: "My victory in front of Franklin would have been valueless had Forrest succeeded in driving your cavalry away and getting upon the Nashville turnpike."

To the student of military history, with the maps before him, the truth of the last statement will be apparent, and yet I regret to add that, however genuine Schofield's sense of gratitude may have been when my services were fresh in his mind,[1] he en-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, p. 1179, Wherry, Schofield's aid-de-camp, to Wilson.

tirely forgot to express it in his official reports, and had but little to say of it in his "Forty-six Years in the Army." Such omissions were not infrequent with the army commanders of the day, for they had not yet learned how to use cavalry in cooperation with other troops. For the first time all the available cavalry in the West was united upon one battlefield, and, although it numbered actually present less than five thousand men, its proportion to the infantry was relatively great, while its actual service was of unusual importance. Considered from a military point of view the incidents so far related gave unmistakable indication of the great part the new cavalry corps was to play in the decisive battle and campaign which were soon to follow.

Schofield, having withdrawn from Franklin in the dead hours of night under cover of my forces, fell back by the turnpike to Nashville, the entrenchments of which he entered before nightfall of December 1. Protected by the screening operations of the cavalry, not a wagon nor a pound of supplies was lost.[1] Indeed, the enemy made no effort whatever to interfere with our retirement. He had been so severely handled and had lost so heavily that he had but little spirit left for an onward movement and must have been greatly surprised when he learned that we had left the works from which he had received such a bloody and fatal repulse.

With detachments on all the turnpikes to Nashville, I bivouacked that night in the Brentwood Hills near Melrose, the country seat of ex-Postmaster General Brown. Early the next day, under Thomas's

[1] Fiske, *supra*, p. 343.

orders, now in immediate command, I withdrew by flank of brigades inside the defenses of Nashville, crossed the Cumberland by the bridges then in place, and made camp in the town of Edgefield on the north side of the river. I established headquarters for the next ten days at the house of Mrs. Shelby and went to work at once with all my aids and officers to repair the damages of the campaign, to rest and build up both men and horses, to reëquip and remount the dismounted troopers, and finally to bring forward every cavalry organization as soon as it could be got ready to take the field. This work required constant attention but, fortunately, with the assistance of my staff, the leading members of which were regular officers, and the hearty support of Thomas, the work went forward without hitch or delay to a successful issue.

During the retreat from Pulaski to Nashville I had no time for correspondence with anyone except my adjutant general and chief quartermaster, both of whom were at Nashville. The burden of equipping and supplying the troops fell on them, and that they did it with extraordinary energy and ability is shown by the results. My own time was wholly occupied in the field, with keeping track of the enemy, and counteracting or resisting his movements. Feeling confident that Forrest would operate mainly on our left to the east of us, I united Hammond's and Stewart's brigades with my central force so I could make the stoutest possible resistance or move with the greatest celerity and weight should Forrest endeavor to avoid action or try to pass around or beyond me. At 3 A. M. on November 29, after reporting exactly my position

to Thomas and the substance of what I had sent to Schofield, I expressed the opinion that the enemy was aiming for Nashville by the Franklin pike, and therefore advised Thomas to get everything off of the Chattanooga Railroad that day, and to concentrate all his forces at Nashville as soon as possible. As has already been recorded, this was what was done.[1]

As soon as I got settled at Edgefield and had a little leisure, I felt it important that General Grant's headquarters should have an inside view of the campaign, and, accordingly, I wrote both Rawlins and Badeau, commending the conduct of Thomas, Schofield, Stanley, and Cox. Under unusual circumstances and discouragements they had worked together effectively and successfully, escaping serious disaster in the successive steps of a campaign in which the different parts of their own commands were more or less scattered, while those of the enemy were concentrated under a leader of singular courage and persistency. To Badeau, Grant's military secretary, I wrote:

> The campaign from Pulaski to this place, in view of the relative strength of the opposing forces, was conducted with great skill. The battle at Franklin was most disastrous to the enemy, owing to the fact that our troops were strongly entrenched in a position they were fully able to occupy and to the further fact that Hood was foolish enough to attack head on. Had fortune not favored us as it did, we might have sustained a frightful disaster.
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> The rebel cavalry crossed at various points in my front for five miles above the town, but were driven beyond the

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, p. 1145, Wilson to Schofield, Nov. 29, 10 P. M.; also, p. 1156, Wilson to Thomas, Nov. 29, 3 A. M. and 2 P. M.

river with much more rapidity and less order than they advanced. Hatch's division (the Fifth) and Croxton's brigade (of the First) behaved splendidly. The affair was the handsomest I have seen during the war. Schofield told me that my report was the most gratifying piece of intelligence he had received during the campaign, for, notwithstanding the repulse of Hood at the same time, his position would have been in the highest degree precarious with Forrest and the Harpeth River in the rear. While he forgot the matter somewhat in his report, that was to have been expected. In fact, it may have been strictly just for I do not want my command to imagine itself worthy of the highest commendation till it has effectively disposed of the rebel cavalry and begun its work against the rebel infantry.

We got back into Nashville without further trouble, and the next day crossed to the north side of the Cumberland. We are now quietly in camp preparing for an aggressive campaign. Most of my horses are barefooted, and many of my men dismounted. When I took command near Pulaski, we had but four thousand five hundred cavalry properly mounted. We have over seven thousand now, having gathered in about three thousand and taken at least one thousand five hundred horses on our way back, which enabled us to send a corresponding number of broken-down horses into the cavalry depot at this place for recuperation.

Since arriving here, the Secretary of War has authorized me to impress "every species of property" necessary to put my command in an efficient condition. To this end, I have sent four regiments into the lower counties of Kentucky for all the horses they can gather, and expect to get at least five thousand within a week. We are making every possible effort throughout the country, within reach, to secure remounts, but arms and equipments are farther behind than horses. Grierson's division leaves St. Louis on the 6th and Memphis on the 7th, and ought to reach

here within a week. When it arrives, with Long's division now refitting at Louisville, my force will be equal to any undertaking. . . . .

At that time it seemed to me that our entire campaign had been admirably managed, that our retreat in the face of Hood's overwhelming force was in every way creditable, and that the battle of Franklin, although greatly in our favor, could not have been used by us as an opportunity for assuming the offensive, because it might have enabled Hood, before the arrival of A. J. Smith, to crush us as soon as we had marched outside of our works.

In the same letter I said:

. . . Thomas, I think, should have concentrated everything at Pulaski or at Franklin, except the garrison at Chattanooga. I urged him strongly two weeks ago to evacuate Decatur and strip the Chattanooga Railroad of troops, bringing in both the Murfreesboro and Decatur garrison and pushing his united force boldly to the front for the purpose of meeting Hood half-way at least.

I think the Murfreesboro garrison will be apt to "go up." It can certainly do no good where it is, and here it might enable us to overwhelm Hood.

I am confident, however, that if Hood will hold on where he is for two weeks or will assault Nashville, he cannot escape destruction. My health is splendid and my hope as high as ever. The news from Sherman is cheering, but I trust he will not be content with Savannah. If he is, the campaign he is conducting will be of no advantage commensurate with the power put forth. . . .

The next day, December 5, having received letters and newspapers giving a full account of General Grant's trip to New York, I wrote as follows:

. . . That our people should admire and love the man who, wielding such unlimited power, still retains an unequaled simplicity and purity of character does not surprise me. No man is so completely degraded as to despise goodness in others. Man seems to differ most from all other beings in this, that, however abject, sordid, and selfish he may be himself, he always aspires to be better than he actually is and in his heart really prefers good over evil. People may bustle and struggle with policy and rascality, but they always love and admire the man who raises himself above such things and is really honest in all his dealings. In fact, all good men recognize that "the chief honor of man's nature is clear and round dealing."

Grant, Sherman, Thomas, and Sheridan! What could be more splendid than the career and character of these soldiers? A country whose cause is in the keeping of such men cannot fail, if it only remains true to itself and to them. The fact that they occupy their position by virtue of their merit is the strongest evidence that it and its governing sentiment are essentially virtuous. I am glad to believe that this is the case and am proud of my day and its glories.

You seem to be disappointed at some of the figures I have given you. . . . Are you sorry I told you the truth, or was the truth unpleasant from the facts it contained? If the former, I had better not write about military matters; if the latter, pray tell me what you expect? You should know by this time that I am not an alarmist, and that I am not likely to arrive at incorrect judgments upon military subjects. In regard to matters here, I am sure my opinions as well as my figures are essentially correct. My sources of information are good, and I do not hesitate to use them where and when I think good will come of it. . . . I have no hesitancy in laying the truth before General Grant upon any question which may have received my attention, and what I write is not

for your exclusive information. You will, of course, exercise your best judgment in what you do with it, remembering always that you may thereby change or modify policies and plans, and that the fear of such a change in many cases might deter me from saying all I could wish. I hope, however, you will not think that this fear would prevent me in any real emergency from saying whatever my sense of duty clearly demanded.

I am making good progress in getting my command ready for the field. Ten days will make a wonderful change.

The rebels are quiet to-day. They are making no effort to cross the Cumberland and showing no disposition to attack our works. Tell General Grant that Hood is doing good service for the Union and ought not to be disturbed for the present. . . . If he will only wait a few days I would not give much for his hide. . . .

I have not yet received the President's approval of Sherman's order giving my command a corps organization. He should either do this at once or make an order establishing a cavalry department, for the simple reason that nothing less than full authority can enable me to thoroughly regenerate it, and to give the staff the proper rank. I have recommended Beaumont for lieutenant colonel and assistant adjutant general, Noyes for assistant inspector general, and Carling for chief quartermaster with the same rank. I have also recommended Andrews for aide-de-camp, with the rank of major. These officers have richly earned their promotions, and I trust they will receive it without further delay. . . .

I may add here that, although my officers performed their duty ably and faithfully to the end, their promotions never came. This may be due to the fact that the corps organization failed to receive the President's sanction, without which it rested solely on the authority of Sherman and

Thomas, under Grant's instructions. It is but just to explain still further that that authority proved equal to all the demands made upon it, and that my staff, after the war was over, was commended by Colonel Chesney, of the British Army, as the best and most efficient of its kind in modern warfare.

It will be remembered that, while Hood was confronting Thomas at Nashville, Sherman was approaching the coast of Georgia with his splendid army from five to seven hundred miles away. He had neither been followed nor effectively opposed by the enemy. Hood, instead of pursuing him, had crossed the Tennessee and forced us back to the Cumberland, where he was besieging our chief depot and strategic center with what he believed to be a fair chance, if successful, of driving us back two hundred miles farther to the Ohio River. The newspapers throughout the country, understanding but little of the real situation, were filled with prognostications of disaster. Commerce and financial affairs were disturbed. Gold was falling, the War Department was demoralized, and even General Grant himself showed greater uneasiness than he had ever exhibited before. Thomas alone was calm and full of confidence. He had organized and armed eight thousand civilian employees of the supply departments and had called in all his outlying detachments except the garrison of Chattanooga. A. J. Smith, with his invincible veterans, after a month's delay, had finally joined him at Nashville, thus raising his effective force to something over sixty thousand of all arms. Nashville was now safe beyond all peradventure. Its garrison was ample for the defense of its long line of entrenchments.

The cavalry alone was still in a bad way. Its horses had been worn out and many permanently disabled by hard work. It therefore required a few days' rest and many remounts before it could take the field again and properly perform the part that would surely fall to its lot. The imperturbable Thomas was the one man who fully appreciated this fact and was willing to wait until the cavalry could gather in its remounts and get fairly ready to participate in the great task before us. New as I was in the West, I had already won the great General's perfect confidence, and it was my constant effort to show myself worthy of it.

## III

### CONFRONTING HOOD AT NASHVILLE

Hood hanging on for the winter—Uneasiness in Washington—Injustice toward Thomas—Orders directing him to fight—Full correspondence—Situation at Nashville — Thomas imperturbable — Embargo of storm—Van Duzer to Eckert—Thaw begins—Army moves out—Defeats Hood—Thomas vindicated—Cavalry turned enemy's flank and took him in rear—Hood's retreat—Wilson's pursuit.

The record now clearly shows, contrary to Grant's belief, that Hood was intent on hanging on for the winter where he was, capturing Murfreesboro, if possible, and that he had no present design of marching to the Ohio.[1]

This assurance was made doubly sure by the further important fact that there was a fleet of iron-clads and gun-boats on the Cumberland under command of Rear Admiral S. P. Lee, patrolling the river from its mouth to Carthage, above Nashville, in coöperation with my outlying cavalry forces.[2] All were especially on the alert to prevent Hood's crossing to the north side of the Cumberland. Upon other and stronger grounds, however, such a move-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 121, 143, 153, 666, 670.
[2] *Ib.*, pp. 3, 4, 85, 97.

ment was highly improbable, if not impossible. He was already far from his base at Florence. It was winter and the roads, whenever heavily used, were soon almost impassable. The territory between the Cumberland and the Ohio had been foraged more than once by both sides. Besides, Hood was without resources with which to repair and operate the railroads, and it was beyond the waning power of the Confederacy to supply them. To use them at all he must first wrest them from our possession, and this could not be done without the defeat of Thomas's entrenched army and the capture of Nashville. That army, concentrated in comparative security behind the fortifications of Nashville, well fed, well clothed, daily growing stronger and more confident under a leader that it loved and trusted and whom it knew familiarly under the fond and expressive name of "Old Pap," was resolutely and vigorously making ready for its spring upon the foe. Under these conditions it must be conceded that the possibility of Hood's marching around Nashville or getting away from Thomas in the effort to cross the Cumberland for a winter march into Kentucky and to the Ohio was not only reduced to a minimum, but was about the wildest and the most desperate and hopeless military undertaking possible to imagine.[1] Here, if at any time during the war, Grant lost his head and failed to act with his usual sound sense. It is, of course, impossible to say with certainty how far the alarm of the President and his immediate military advisers, Stanton and Halleck, may have contributed to this, or how far Grant's judgment may have been disturbed by

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 96, 97.

his fear that Thomas would fail to hold Hood, and that this would condemn both himself and Sherman for stripping Thomas and leaving him with widely dispersed forces to contend against Hood's compact veteran army. And yet, Lincoln, Stanton, Halleck, and Grant, although a thousand miles from the scene of conflict, concurred in assuming to understand the situation better than the level-headed Thomas in fearing that Hood would drop him and get away on this wild march. Each in turn sought to impose on Thomas his own views as to the management of the campaign and united in harassing him beyond all patience and reason into fighting a battle against his own tried and well-seasoned judgment before the preparations which he deemed essential to success were complete. He was twitted with being slow. He was threatened with removal. Orders, indeed, were drafted to that end, and, as if to spare him no humiliation, it was proposed that he should turn over his command to Schofield, his inferior in rank, and report to him for duty. Not satisfied with this, Grant ordered Logan from City Point to Nashville. And then, as the crowning evidence of lost equipoise, of confusion in counsel, and of want of confidence either in Thomas, Schofield, or Logan, or in all of them, Grant himself left his army in Lee's front at Petersburg and got as far as Washington on his way to Nashville.[1] Grant's telegrams of this fortnight show that he had a good memory for injuries, real or fancied, with an utter lack of sympathy or active friendship for Thomas, dating possibly as far back as Grant's unhappy days after Shiloh, or Thomas's coldness and inhos-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 195.

pitality at Chattanooga. They also disclose a willingness, if not a settled purpose, on Grant's part to cause Thomas's removal and downfall, provided the authorities at Washington could be induced to take the responsibility for such radical action. When told plainly by Halleck that if he wished Thomas removed he would have to do it himself and take the sole responsibility, he hesitated and, while not abandoning his purpose, he drafted orders to that end, but, fortunately for Thomas and the country, they were not sent.

As the situation was without a parallel in the history of the war, and as my own name was freely used in the correspondence and as my fortunes were thus involved and placed peculiarly on the hazard, it will be of interest, before telling what was finally done and how, to recall from the official files something of what was said.

On December 1, the day after Franklin, after telling Grant "everything goes well," Thomas telegraphed Halleck fully as to his plans, as follows:

After General Schofield's fight of yesterday, feeling convinced that the enemy very far outnumbered him, both in infantry and cavalry, I determined to retire to the fortifications around Nashville, until General Wilson can get his cavalry equipped. He has now about one-fourth the number of the enemy, and consequently is no match for him. I have two ironclads here, with several gunboats, and Commander Fitch assures me that Hood can neither cross the Cumberland nor blockade it. I, therefore, think it best to wait here until Wilson can equip his cavalry. If Hood attacks me here, he will be more seriously damaged than he was yesterday; if he remains until Wilson gets equipped I can whip him, and will move

against him at once. I have Murfreesboro strongly held, and, therefore, feel easy in regard to its safety. Chattanooga, Bridgeport, Stevenson, and Elk River Bridge have also strong garrisons.[1]

This dispatch, resting on the solid results achieved in the concentration of widely dispersed forces in the presence of a veteran invading army, on which a most disastrous repulse had just been inflicted, and giving sound military reasons for its justification, ought to have been implicitly accepted by his official superiors. For Thomas was no untried general. He had long since demonstrated on more than one occasion in the most incontestable way his capacity to stand alone. He had done so at the outset of his career as an independent commander at Mill Springs against Zollicoffer, again at Stone River, again at Chicamauga, when his superior in command retired defeated and disheartened from the field. It was his army that, in the presence of Grant, rushed the heights of Missionary Ridge, which Sherman had assaulted in vain on another part of the field. And throughout the Atlanta campaign, as Sherman's loyal lieutenant, where he might justly have been chief, he stood every test and proved himself over and over again a thoroughly level-headed, trustworthy, and most capable general.

There was, therefore, neither justification nor excuse for the action taken at Washington on receipt of the above dispatch. Instead of approving it directly and promptly, or of assuring Thomas that he had the government's confidence, which he had so well earned, and leaving the details of immediate

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 3.

operations to his good judgment and sound discretion, Stanton hastened the next day, December 2, 1864, at 10:30 A. M., to telegraph Grant as follows:

The President feels solicitous about the disposition of General Thomas to lay in fortifications for an indefinite period "until Wilson gets equipments." This looks like the McClellan and Rosecrans strategy of do nothing and let the rebels raid the country. The President wishes you to consider the matter.

To this Grant replied at 1 P. M. the same day:

Immediately on receipt of Thomas's dispatch I sent him a dispatch, which no doubt you read as it passed through the office.

This dispatch, dated 11 A. M., December 2, reads as follows:

If Hood is permitted to remain quietly about Nashville, you will lose all the road back to Chattanooga and possibly have to abandon the line of the Tennessee. Should he attack you it is all well, but if he does not you should attack him before he fortifies. Arm and put in the trenches your quartermaster employees, citizens, etc.[1]

Later, at 1:30 P. M., Grant, as though not satisfied with what he had already said, wired again:

With your citizen employees armed, you can move out of Nashville and force the enemy to retire or fight upon ground of your own choosing. After the repulse of Hood at Franklin, it looks to me that, instead of falling back to Nashville, we should have taken the offensive against the enemy where he was. At this distance, however, I may err as to the best method of dealing with the enemy. You will now suffer incalculable injury upon your rail-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 16.

roads, if Hood is not speedily disposed of. Put forth, therefore, every possible exertion to attain this end. Should you get him retreating give him no peace.[1]

Whereupon, at 10 P. M. the same day, Thomas answered Grant as follows:

Your telegrams of 11 A. M. and 1:30 P. M. to-day are received. At the time that Hood was whipped at Franklin, I had at this place but about five thousand men of General Smith's command, which, added to the force under General Schofield, would not have given me more than twenty-five thousand men; besides General Schofield felt convinced that he could not hold the enemy at Franklin until the five thousand could reach him. As General Wilson's cavalry force also numbered only about one-fourth that of Forrest's, I thought it best to draw the troops back to Nashville, and wait the arrival of General Smith's force, and also a force of about five thousand commanded by Major General Steedman, which I had ordered up from Chattanooga. The division of General Smith arrived yesterday morning, and General Steedman's troops arrived last night. I now have infantry enough to assume the offensive, if I had more cavalry, and will take the field anyhow as soon as the remainder of General McCook's division of cavalry reaches here, which I hope it will do in two or three days. We can neither get reënforcements or equipments at this great distance from the north very easily; and it must be remembered that my command was made up of the two weakest corps of General Sherman's army and all the dismounted cavalry except one brigade, and the task of reorganizing and equipping has met with many delays, which have enabled Hood to take advantage of my crippled condition. I earnestly hope, however, that in a few more days I shall be able to give him a fight[2]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 17.
[2] *Ib.*, 6. 17.

A few minutes later he explained to Halleck:

I have succeeded in concentrating a force of infantry about equal to that of the enemy's, and as soon as I can get the remaining brigade of McCook's division of cavalry here I will move against the enemy, although my cavalry force will not be more than half that of the enemy. I have labored under many disadvantages since assuming the direction of affairs here, not the least of which was the reorganizing, remounting and equipping of a cavalry force sufficient to contend with Forrest. The signal officers and reconnoitering parties report this afternoon that the enemy are moving to our right and going into position southwest of the city or below. That would be by far the most advantageous position he could take for us, as his line of communication would be more exposed with him in that position than in any other. The iron-clads and gunboats are so disposed as to prevent Hood from crossing the river, and Captain Fitch assures me that he can safely convoy steamers up and down the river. I have also taken measures to have the river patrolled as high up as Carthage.[1]

Meanwhile, at Grant's suggestion, Stanton had authorized Thomas to seize and "impress horses, and every other species of property" at Nashville and Louisville. "Horses and equipments enough for Wilson might thus be procured immediately."[2] This was a stroke of genius for which Thomas and Grant and not Stanton should have the praise.

At 9:30 A. M. December 3 Thomas wired Halleck:

The enemy made no demonstration to-day, except to advance his pickets about five hundred yards on the Nolensville, Franklin, and Hillsborough pikes. I have a good entrenched line on the hills around Nashville, and hope

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 18.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 18.

to be able to report ten thousand cavalry mounted and equipped in less than a week, when I shall feel able to march against Hood. I gave an order for the impressment of horses last night, and we received the authority of the Secretary of War this morning.[1]

On the same day Thomas repeated to Admiral S. P. Lee precisely the same reasons already given Halleck and Grant for falling back from Franklin to Nashville: "To concentrate my infantry and to give time to General Wilson to arm and equip sufficient cavalry to meet Forrest. I have now nearly as much infantry as Hood, and in a few days hope to have cavalry enough to assume the offensive. In the meantime, Captain Fitch has cheerfully complied with my request to patrol the river above and below the city. I am, therefore, in hopes we shall in a few days be able to take the offensive on pretty even terms with the enemy."[2]

The War Department was not alone dependent on Thomas for its information. It also received much news through the telegraphic correspondence between Major T. T. Eckert, the head of the telegraph bureau in Washington, and Captain Van Duzer of the Quartermaster's Department, a very intelligent, wide-awake, and capable officer at Nashville. This officer, on the 3rd, after stating Thomas's readiness to receive and repel attack, and giving the position of his forces, wired: "It is a very strong line strongly held," and adding: "Nothing heard from Forrest, but General Wilson is looking after him and no apprehension is felt."[3]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94. p. 29.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 30.

[3] *Ib.*, p. 32. See also pp. 45, 47.

My own orders, directing the seizure of every species of property necessary to put the cavalry forces into efficient condition, were being executed with the utmost energy by the officers of my command. To my inspectors I said: "You will perceive that the authority is ample; use it without stint for seizure both of equipments and horses. . . . I leave many of the details to you in pursuance of General Thomas's general instructions, confident that you will do all in your power to push matters to the utmost. Spare nothing which is necessary, but have everything done in an orderly manner."[1]

It will thus be seen that Thomas was not only keeping everybody who had any right to know fully advised as to his wise plans for the concentration of his army and the strengthening of his cavalry arm, but was proceeding to execute them with perfect good sense and unrelenting energy. No apprehension was felt at Nashville. There was not the slightest excuse for any at Washington. Besides, the fundamental rule for the conduct of military affairs remote from the seat of government demanded that the officer in immediate command should be trusted with the details. Nobody understood this rule better than Grant. He acted on it throughout in his relations with Sherman and Sheridan, and it is both interesting and instructive to observe that at the very time he was most insistent in his effort to interfere with Thomas, treating him "like a school boy," he was invoking the rule in behalf of Schofield against Stanton, and flatly refusing to impose either Stanton's judgment or his

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 34, 35, 36, 39-48, 63, 64, 76, 149.

own on that accomplished officer, who was then not only in command of troops, but also of the Department of the Ohio. It appears that, while in the field, Schofield had assigned Stoneman to duty as second in command of the Department. This Stanton did not approve, declaring: "I think him (Stoneman) one of the most worthless officers in the service, who has failed in everything entrusted to him." He had, therefore, caused to be prepared and transmitted an order relieving him from such command and directing him to proceed to Cincinnati to await orders. When Grant's attention was called to the matter, he very promptly sent Stanton the following telegram, dated December 5, 1864, at 1 P. M.:

> I am not in favor of using officers who have signally failed when entrusted with command in important places. *Again, as a general rule, when an officer is entrusted with the command of a department he ought to be allowed to use the material given him in his own way.* I would simply suggest the transmission of this dispatch to General Schofield and leave it discretionary then with him to employ General Stoneman, or relieve him from duty, as he deems best.[1]

When Schofield's attention was drawn to the subject by the War Department he replied: "I fully approve the correctness of the rule stated by Lieutenant General Grant," and in face of Stanton's order removing Stoneman retained him in command.

Why Thomas did not receive the benefit of this well-known and most salutary rule will, as far as the

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 52, 54, 58, 59.

official records disclose, always remain a mystery. The inference that Grant never quite forgave Thomas for his cold reception at Chattanooga, elsewhere described, and for Halleck's preference of Thomas to Grant following Shiloh and during the advance on Corinth, seems to be the most probable explanation. In any view, and for whatever cause, it is certain that Grant refused Thomas as an independent commander that considerate and kindly trust and confidence freely accorded to others, to which the facts of record fully entitled him.

Meanwhile Grant, acting on his erroneous assumption, forgetful of Thomas's high and approved character, in face of reassuring statements from him, and of his purpose to assume the offensive and to attack without unnecessary delay, and of like assurance from Van Duzer that no apprehension was felt in Nashville, continued, with increasing force, to impose his own views on Thomas as to the method of conducting the campaign for Hood's overthrow. In this he was, doubtless, largely influenced both by Halleck and Stanton. Halleck, in his telegram to Grant, 3:30 P. M., December 5, claiming that twenty-two thousand cavalry horses had been issued at Louisville, Lexington, and Nashville since September 20, added the erroneous and misleading statement:

> If this number, *without any campaign,* is already reduced to ten thousand mounted men, as reported by General Wilson, it may be safely assumed that the cavalry of that army will never be mounted, for the destruction of horses in the last two months has there alone been equal to the remounts obtained from the entire West.[1]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 56.

The absurdity and essential untruth of this telegram, as far as it was intended to apply to the efforts of General Thomas and myself to obtain remounts—and that was evidently its sole object—becomes at once apparent when it is recalled that, under Sherman's express orders, I had dismounted a large number of the cavalry then in the field to complete the remount of Kilpatrick's division, which had been overworked and run down before the March to the Sea began in the fruitless effort to overtake and bring Hood to bay. Then followed at once one of the most strenuous, wasting, and perilous campaigns of the war, during which, with Hatch's division and Croxton's brigade alone of nearly fifty thousand men nominally in my command, I was called upon to aid Schofield in resisting Forrest and the advance of Hood's army.[1] And in spite of all our efforts neither Grierson, Burbridge, nor Garrard had been brought to Nashville. Kilpatrick, with by far the strongest and best-mounted division, was hundreds of miles away, while Long and many others were waiting remounts at Memphis or Louisville, or were uselessly employed and dispersed in far away and comparatively unimportant fields. Even admitting all that Halleck claimed, it should be remembered, and he above all ought to have recalled, that neither Thomas nor myself had had the slightest responsibility for either the condition of the cavalry or its wide and useless dispersal. Both of us were new to our respective commands, and the responsibility for existing conditions was upon those who preceded us. Besides it was no time for fault-finding or cheese-paring. We were entitled

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, p. 358, Sherman to Wilson.

to the loyal and energetic support of our superiors. Help, at least in good will, and not carping criticism, based on mistakes or failures of others, was what we needed. I say "we" deliberately, because it was my great honor and privilege to have been joined with Thomas, and, under him, I was chiefly responsible for, and the chief object of, thoughtless bureaucratic criticism. Happily for me, as well as for the country, I had the "Rock of Chicamauga" at my back.

On receipt of Halleck's telegram, Grant wired Thomas on December 5 at 8 P. M.:

> Is there not danger of Forrest moving down the Cumberland to where he can cross it? It seems to me while you should be getting up your cavalry as rapidly as possible to look after Forrest, Hood should be attacked where he is. Time strengthens him in all probability as much as it does you.[1]

There were several good reasons why this telegram was ill-advised. While possibly harmless and well meant, it was quite unnecessary, as well as contrary to Grant's rule, and it served no good end. Every possible precaution had been taken to prevent any such movement on Forrest's part. No such movement was, in fact, contemplated, and Hood, far from being strengthened in any way by delay, was daily finding it more difficult to subsist his army, dependent for its supplies upon wagon trains from distant stations, while every possible man the South could get into the field was hurried to eastern Georgia to help Beauregard, Hardee, Wheeler, and Bragg in the vain effort to head off Sherman.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 55.

Thomas, on the other hand, in full possession of his rail and river lines, was in the midst of abundance and was gaining rapidly in strength. On the very day of Grant's dispatch, Thomas, 10 P. M., December 5, was crossing it by a telegram to Halleck informing him fully as to Hood's passive but increasingly difficult position, and fixing the 7th as the date for moving out against him.[1] To Grant himself Thomas, in direct reply to his telegram of the 5th, received about 8 P. M. of the 6th, again repeated his promise to march against Hood just as soon as he could get up a respectable force of cavalry:

> General Wilson has parties out now pressing horses, and I hope to have some six thousand or eight thousand cavalry remounted in three days from this time. General Wilson has just left me, having received instructions to hurry the cavalry remount as rapidly as possible. I do not think it prudent to attack Hood with less than six thousand cavalry to cover my flanks, because he has, under Forrest, at least twelve thousand. I have no doubt Forrest will attempt to cross the river, but I am in hopes the gun-boats will be able to prevent him. The enemy has made no new developments to-day.[2]

It is no doubt true, in the light of the later published records, that Thomas overestimated Forrest's strength, which had also been scattered, depleted, and worn, as it was, by Jackson's detachment to Murfreesboro and by Wheeler's in pursuit of Sherman, to say nothing of the strenuous resistance offered by my troops at every advantageous point on his march from the Tennessee. But neither

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 55, 70.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 70.

Thomas nor I knew it, and even if we had known his exact strength, which we had no means of learning, it was the part of the highest wisdom and the soundest military sense to reverse the conditions and set into the field against him an overwhelming force—if possible, two to one—which, with a little delay, involving no great risk, it was quite possible to do, and was, in fact, done a little later. Schofield, as we have seen, shared with Thomas the belief as to the great numerical superiority of the rebel cavalry under the prestige of Forrest's able and intrepid leadership, supported by such veteran division commanders as Buford, Red Jackson, and Chalmers.

But Grant, without waiting for Thomas's reply, as above, and yielding, as it would appear, for the moment to an impatient impulse to assert his authority, if not to show his superior generalship, sent this peremptory order to Thomas on December 6, at 4 P. M.:

> Attack Hood at once, and wait no longer for a remount of your cavalry. There is great danger of delay resulting in a campaign back to the Ohio River.

To which Thomas at once replied, same day, at 9 P. M.:

> Your telegram of 4 P. M. this day is just received. I will make the necessary dispositions and attack Hood at once agreeably to your order, though I believe it will be hazardous with the small force of cavalry now at my service.

And this, as shown by orders, Thomas cautiously but resolutely set himself to do, and but for the intervention of Providence would in all probability

have made his attack on the morning of the 10th. Meanwhile Halleck, at 1 P. M. of the 6th, repeated to Thomas the substance of his inconsequential telegram to Grant about the twenty-two thousand cavalry horses issued since September 20; to which Thomas promptly made reply that, notwithstanding the large figures, which he did not dispute, there had, nevertheless, been great losses from battle and disease, "and a large number of the men are still dismounted." This was the cardinal and unhappy fact that confronted both Thomas and myself, and which we were doing our utmost to remedy. Thomas added: "I have seen General Wilson to-night, who encourages me to hope that he will be able to remount six thousand or seven thousand men in three days from this time. The enemy made no new developments to-day. I will attack as soon as General Wilson can get together a sufficient cavalry force to protect my flanks."[1] To this sane, specific, and reassuring telegram it would seem no valid military objection could be found or offered, but Stanton's abundant vocabulary was more than equal to the occasion, and his characteristic intemperance of judgment and expression was embodied and fully reflected in the following dispatch of December 7, at 10:20 A. M., to Grant:

> . . . Thomas seems unwilling to attack because it is hazardous, as if all war was anything but hazardous. If he waits for Wilson to get ready Gabriel will be blowing his last horn.

Evidently Stanton had not forgotten my last interview with him, when my division was passing

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 71.

through Washington the summer previous. It is equally clear that I had not especially commended myself to him in our somewhat abrupt conference. It is also evident that Grant was in a receptive mood for suggestions adverse to Thomas, as shown in his reply, of December 7, at 1:30 P. M., which was not delayed:

> You probably saw my order to Thomas to attack. If he does not do it promptly I would recommend superseding him by *Schofield, leaving Thomas subordinate.* . . .

All of which was a curious revival against Thomas, in quarters that ought to have known better, of the foolish "On to Richmond" cry earlier in the war, and without half the excuse or nearly as much sense behind it. It is, however, greatly to the credit of Halleck and Grant that their good military sense in other directions did not desert them, and that, notwithstanding their unfriendly and discouraging attitude toward Thomas and their unjustifiable efforts to impose their views from afar upon him, they continued their earnest efforts to reënforce and strengthen him from every possible quarter.[1] But Grant, having made up his mind that it was necessary to remove Thomas, while hesitating to act himself, yet kept the subject, with his customary tenacity of purpose, before the War Department. On December 8, at 4 P. M., he telegraphed Halleck:

> . . . If Thomas has not struck yet he ought to be ordered to hand over his command to Schofield. There is no better man to repel an attack than Thomas, but I fear he is too cautious to ever take the initiative.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 96.

In this same telegram renewed expression was given to the fear that "either Hood or Breckenridge will get to the Ohio"—fears which the events showed were idle and without sufficient foundation. Moreover, it soon became apparent that Thomas's representations and appeals were taking hold on the sober second thought of the war authorities at Washington, and that they balked at his removal and declined any responsibility for it. Grant was tersely told so by Halleck on December 8 at 9 P. M.:

If you wish General Thomas relieved from command give the order. No one here will, I think, interfere. The responsibility, however, will be yours, as no one here, so far as I am informed, wishes General Thomas's removal.[1]

At this Grant also balked, as indicated in his reply the same day at 10 P. M. to Halleck:

Your dispatch of 9 P. M. just received. I want General Thomas reminded of the importance of immediate action. I sent him a dispatch this evening which will probably urge him on. I would not say relieve him until I further hear from him.[2]

Then followed a dispatch to Thomas, wholly unobjectionable either in tone or matter, and expressing the views of the Lieutenant General on the situation, as he had a perfect right to do, and while it was erroneous in its inferences as to Hood's plans and gave renewed expression to the baseless fear of "a foot race" back to the Ohio, yet was temperate in language, not unkind, and quite correct in pointing out to Thomas his great opportunity to destroy

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 96.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 96.

one of the three armies of the enemy. It is greatly to be regretted that all of his communications to his sturdy and deserving lieutenant were not in the same vein. The whole dispatch of December 8, at 6:30 P. M., was as follows:

Your dispatch of yesterday (referring to Breckenridge's retreat and pursuit by Stoneman) received. It looks to me evident the enemy are trying to cross the Cumberland River and are scattered. Why not attack at once? By all means avoid the contingency of a foot race to see which, you or Hood, can beat to the Ohio. If you think necessary, call on the Governors of States to send a force into Louisville to meet the enemy if he should cross the river. You clearly never should cross, except in rear of the enemy. Now is one of the finest opportunities ever presented of destroying one of the three armies of the enemy. If destroyed, he never can replace it. Use the means at your command, and you can do this and cause a rejoicing what will resound from one end of the land to the other.[1]

This was crossed by a telegram, same day, at 9:30 P. M., from Thomas to Halleck:

No material change has been discovered in the enemy's position to-day. He attempted to advance his picket line on the Franklin road, but was driven back. With every exertion on the part of General Wilson he will not be able to get his force of cavalry in condition to move before Sunday (the 11th). I have a report from the river as high up as Carthage; no body of the enemy can be seen or heard of. I also have information that there is no enemy between Carthage and Albany, Ky. There are two iron-clads above Harpeth Shoals on the Cumberland River, and Admiral Lee is at Clarksville with the "Cincinnati." I have requested him to patrol the river from Clarksville

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 97.

to Harpeth, so as to discover and effectually prevent any attempt of the enemy to cross below.[1]

On the same page will be found a reassuring dispatch, confirmatory of the above, from Van Duzer to Eckert, which shows the continued arrival of reenforcements to Thomas, while my own reports of progress to him and my efforts appear at nearly every page of the record, and especial attention is called to that of December 8, to which Thomas refers and from all of which it will be perfectly apparent to the military student that all was going well, that the moment of attack was drawing nigh, and that every energy was on the stretch to be ready for it. But, in the meantime, in spite of all that we could do or say, and in the face of daily improving conditions in our preparations for the offensive, measures of the gravest character were being matured at the War Department under the express direction of General Grant, due, most unhappily, to his misunderstanding of the facts and his persistent disregard of his own wise rule of non-interference in the plans and details of execution on the part of independent commanders and his inexplicable refusal to accord to Thomas, incomparably the best of the lot, that freedom of judgment and action which he so generously extended to Meade, Sherman, Sheridan, and Schofield. As the crisis was grave, and as Grant's part in it was perhaps the least creditable incident in his whole military career, it is essential that the facts, as they officially appear, should all be carefully recalled before resuming the thread of my own personal reminiscences.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 97.

Van Duzer's dispatch to Eckert on December 8, at 8 P. M., above referred to, becomes important, and was as follows:

No change in position since last report. Enemy still in force in front, as was found by reconnoissance, and a large artillery force upon south bank of the Cumberland below, between here and the Shoals. One of our gun-boats came to grief in exchange of iron at Bell's Ferry. Rebel General Lyon holds same bank below Harpeth to Fort Donelson, but does not fight gun-boats. Reënforcements now at Clarksville will reach here by a railroad to-morrow night. Colonel Tompson's black brigade reached here yesterday, having come from Johnsonville via Clarksville. Deserters report Hood's headquarters seven miles out on Hillsboro pike; Forrest three miles on Granny White Road with main army on same road nearer town.[1]

With no other warrant than the above, without material change in the positions of the respective armies or any increasing menace from Hood, and upon premises now indisputably known and clearly seen to have been false, having at the time no adequate support in the reports which had reached him at the hour of his own telegram, and without waiting for Thomas's reply to his message of 8:30 P. M. of the 8th, quoted above, Grant did himself the great wrong and Thomas the intolerable injustice disclosed in the following message to Halleck of December 9, at 11 A. M.:

Dispatch of 8 P. M. last evening from Nashville shows the enemy scattered for more than seventy miles down the river, and no attack yet made by Thomas. Please telegraph orders, relieving him at once and placing Schofield

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 97.

in command. Thomas should be directed to turn over all orders and dispatches received since the battle of Franklin to Schofield.

It is now well known that except a small raiding force under Lyon, which was being sharply looked after by detachments of my cavalry under the vigorous leadership of McCook and LaGrange, the enemy had no force on the lower Cumberland and none on the river nearer Nashville except a small battery of four guns and a brigade of Chalmers's division. The main rebel army, as clearly stated by Van Duzer, "so far from being scattered for more than seventy miles down the river," was intact and making no movement whatever in force to cross the Cumberland. Lyon, as it turned out, was a negligible quantity, and McCook had far better have been held in hand for the decisive battle at Nashville.

Pursuant, however, to Grant's telegram, tentative action had been taken in the Adjutant General's office in Washington to carry it into effect by general order, as follows:

In accordance with the following dispatch from Lieutenant General Grant, viz:

Please telegraph order relieving him (General Thomas) at once, and placing Schofield in command. Thomas should be directed to turn over all dispatches received since the battle of Franklin to Schofield.

The President orders:

1. That Maj. Gen. J. M. Schofield assume command of all troops in the Departments of the Cumberland, the Ohio and the Tennessee.

2. That Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas report to Scho-

field for duty, and turn over to him all orders and dispatches received by him, as specified above.

By order of the Secretary of War.

It was well for the country that such an order should have given pause to all concerned in the War Department and that no one seemed to be desirous or in haste to give it vitality by lending his signature. Meanwhile Halleck, returning to his old-time friendship for Thomas, dating back to the days of Corinth, knowing Grant's hostile attitude, before the receipt of his order at 1:45 P. M. directing Thomas's peremptory removal, sent him this dispatch, dated December 9, at 10:30 A. M.:

General Grant expresses much dissatisfaction at your delay in attacking the enemy. If you wait till General Wilson mounts all his cavalry you will wait till doomsday, for the waste equals the supply. Moreover, you will soon be in the same condition that Rosecrans was last year —with so many animals that you cannot feed them. Reports already come in of a scarcity of forage.[1]

I can readily forgive Halleck for stealing Stanton's thunder at my expense and repeating it to Thomas, to my prejudice, for the reason that it was full time for somebody to put Thomas on his guard, and Halleck had sense enough and the courage to do it. Moreover, the telegram, although it must have wrung Thomas's great soul, yet brought into light and play the loyal and intensely patriotic attributes of the man. Thomas replied to Halleck on December 9, at 2 P. M.:

Your dispatch of 10:30 A. M. this date is received. I regret that General Grant should feel dissatisfaction at

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 114.

my delay in attacking the enemy. I feel conscious that I have done everything in my power to prepare, and that the troops could not have been gotten ready before this, and if he should order me to be relieved I will submit without a murmur. A terrible storm of freezing rain has come on since daylight, which will render an attack impossible until it breaks.[1]

Thomas had already at an earlier hour sent the following reply to Grant, but it will be noted that it was also responsive to Halleck's message just quoted:

Your dispatch of 8:30 P. M. of the 8th is just received. I had nearly completed my preparations to attack the enemy to-morrow morning, but a terrible storm of freezing rain has come on to-day, which will make it impossible for our men to fight to any advantage. I am, therefore, compelled to wait for the storm to break and make the attack immediately after. Admiral Lee is patrolling the river above and below the city, and I believe will be able to prevent the enemy from crossing. There is no doubt that Hood's forces are considerably scattered along the river with the view of attempting a crossing, but it has been impossible for me to organize and equip the troops for an attack at an earlier time. Major General Halleck informs me that you are very much dissatisfied with my delay in attacking. I can only say I have done all in my power to prepare, and if you should deem it necessary to relieve me I shall submit without a murmur.[2]

General Thomas, without parading it, was a man of deep religious convictions and doubtless thoroughly shared the belief that "there is a Divinity which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may." But whether so or not it is doubtful if in the

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 114.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 115.

life of any good and great man there was ever more timely or clearer providential interference in his fortunes and in his favor than that pitiless "terrible storm of freezing rain" to which he makes reference in his telegrams to both Halleck and Grant. It continued in its effects for four days—days absolutely essential to the completion of his and my orderly and final preparations for attack. It confirmed the War Department in its hesitation and reluctance to give immediate effect to the extreme measure ordered by Grant. It gave a practical and unanswerable reason for further delay, and stayed for a time even the hand of the grim Lieutenant General. It left him unconvinced, growling, and waiting to strike and on the watch for opportunity, of which he was not slow to avail himself, but in which, on credible testimony, he ultimately failed, solely by reason of another special providence, this time in the shape of wise, courageous Major T. T. Eckert, head of the telegraph bureau in the War Department, and afterwards, for many years, the president of the Western Union Telegraph Company.

On receipt of Thomas's dispatch, Halleck telegraphed Grant, on December 9, at 4:10 P. M.:

> Orders relieving Thomas had been made out when his telegram of this P. M. was received. If you still wish these orders telegraphed they will be forwarded.[1]

To which Grant replied at 5:30 P. M.:

> General Thomas has been urged in every way possible to attack the enemy, even to giving him the positive orders. He did say he thought he would be able to attack

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 116.

the 7th, but didn't do so, nor has he given a reason for not doing it. I am very unwilling to do injustice to an officer who has done as much good service as General Thomas has, however, and will, therefore, suspend the order relieving him until it is seen whether he will do anything.[1]

In a far saner tone, Grant, at 7:30 P. M., sent this:

Your dispatch of 1 P. M. received. I have as much confidence in your conducting a battle rightly as I have in any other officer; but it has seemed to me that you have been slow, and I have had no explanation of affairs to convince me otherwise. Receiving your dispatch of 2 P. M. from General Halleck, before I did the one to me, I telegraphed to suspend the order relieving you until we should hear further. I hope most sincerely that there will be no necessity of repeating the orders, and that the facts will show that you have been right all the time.[2]

The embargo of the storm did not seem to have impressed Grant, and, as his telegram completely ignored or turned down this and other very full explanations of the delay, Thomas, at 11:30 P. M., on the same day, tersely repeated his controlling and most important reason for the delay, with the apparent purpose of leaving Grant free to do as he pleased.

Your dispatch of 7:30 P. M. is just received. I can only say in further explanation why I have not attacked Hood that I could not concentrate my troops and get their transportation in order in shorter time than it has been done, and am satisfied I have made every effort that was possible to complete the task.[3]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 116.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 115.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 115.

Earlier in the evening, at 9:30 P. M., Thomas closed the day by a further report to Halleck:

There is no perceptible change in the appearance of the enemy's lines to-day. Have heard from the Cumberland River, between Harpeth and Clarksville, and there are no indications of any preparations on the part of the enemy to cross. The storm still continues.[1]

The record shows that Thomas, as was his duty, kept Halleck fully and accurately advised from day to day, almost from hour to hour, especially as to the imperative delay incident to the storm and its effects, and reiterated his purpose to attack Hood "as soon as we have a thaw." But he did not again volunteer any direct communication to Grant. On the 11th, at 4 P. M., however, Grant wired Thomas in terms showing that it was still "On to Richmond" with him, regardless of weather:

If you delay attack longer the mortifying spectacle will be witnessed of a rebel army moving for the Ohio River, and you will be forced to act, accepting such weather as you find. Let there be no further delay. Hood cannot stand even a drawn battle so far from his supplies of ordnance stores. If he retreats and you follow, he must lose his material and much of his army. I am in hopes of receiving word from you to-day announcing that you have moved. Delay no longer for weather or reënforcements.[2]

To this Thomas, on December 11, at 10:30 P. M., replied:

Your dispatch of 4 P. M. this day is just received. I will obey the order as promptly as possible, however much I may regret it, as the attack will have to be made under

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 114.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 143.

every disadvantage. The whole country is covered with a perfect sheet of ice and sleet, and it is with difficulty the troops are able to move about on level ground. It was my intention to attack Hood as soon as the ice melted, and would have done so yesterday had it not been for the storm.[1]

This ended all correspondence between them until after the battle had been fought and won. To show indisputably that Thomas was perfectly sincere and quite correct as to the imperative need for delay, and that Grant was wholly wrong in his insistence upon attack, it is only necessary to quote from the record the judgment of other competent observers on the ground. On the 9th Van Duzer reported to Eckert: ". . . Storm of sleet and snow to-day prevents any movement of our force or of the enemy." On the 11th: ". . . . Frost still holds everybody, except wood cutters, idle. No movement to report either on our part or that of the enemy for the past three days." On the 13th: ". . . . Thaw has begun and to-morrow we can move without skates."[2] General T. J. Wood, the capable commander of the Fourth Army Corps, reported to Thomas on the 10th: ". . . . The ground between the enemy's lines and my own is covered with a heavy sleet, which would make the handling of troops very difficult, if not impracticable."[3] That this also was the judgment of every corps commander in the army will further appear in the course of my personal narrative. Schofield, who was to be the beneficiary of Thomas's removal on

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 143.
[2] *Ib.*, pp. 117, 143, 171.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 132.

the 12th, reporting to Thomas, said: ". . . . It seems hardly possible that Hood can attempt any move at this time."[1]

Nowhere, and never, perhaps, in Grant's life can be found an episode which better illustrates that trait in his character which Mrs. Grant had in mind when she said: "My husband is a very obstinate man," a quality which, rightly directed, as it always was in battle, helped to make him great, but which, in this instance, was wholly misdirected and came perilously near to involving him in an act of cruel injustice and a great and harmful mistake. He had, however, met his match even in that quality, and, having been fought to a standstill by the equal or greater obstinacy of Thomas, ceased to urge him further to an act which was against his judgment, and, without confessing his defeat, relentlessly turned to other expedients. Logan, having been on sick leave and left behind at his home in Illinois when Sherman cut loose from Atlanta, did not participate in the March to the Sea, and in an effort to get to the front and rejoin his corps command under Sherman visited Grant's headquarters at City Point. The result of his conference with Grant was special order No. 149, dated December 13, 1864:

1. Maj. Gen. John A. Logan, U. S. Volunteers, will proceed immediately to Nashville, Tenn., reporting by telegraph to the Lieutenant General commanding his arrival at Louisville, Ky., and also his arrival at Nashville, Tenn. By command of Lieutenant General Grant.[2]

Just what use Grant proposed to make of Logan on his arrival at Nashville does not officially appear,

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 157.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 171.

but the latter is himself authority for the statement that he expected to assume command of the army at Nashville in case Thomas had not engaged the enemy when he arrived there, and this view is supported by David Homer Bates, in an interesting book, in which he says that on the date of the above order sending Logan to Nashville "Grant wrote his second order relieving Thomas and sent it by the hand of Logan, to be delivered in person, provided when Logan arrived at Nashville Thomas had not yet advanced."[1] But not satisfied with this Bates further states that Grant, before Logan was a day's journey away, started in person for Nashville via Washington, where he arrived on the afternoon of the 15th and found the wires interrupted, for reasons which all the world now understands. A conference between Lincoln, Stanton, Grant, and Halleck followed, at which Grant declared his purpose to go to Nashville, meantime relieving Thomas and placing Schofield in immediate command until his arrival.

Grant then wrote this third order, removing Thomas, and although Lincoln and Stanton were strongly opposed to such action, they were forced to consent because of Grant's urgent importunity. The final order for the removal of Thomas was then handed to Eckert for transmission, Grant going to Willard's Hotel to prepare for his departure.[2]

Most interesting details follow, telling how Eckert, on his own responsibility, held the telegram until he could hear from Van Duzer, which he did in the course of an hour, at 11 P. M., in cipher, in-

[1] Bates, "Lincoln in the Telegraph Office," p. 313.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 315.

cluding one from Thomas, dated December 14, at 8 P. M., both of which Bates translated; the one from Thomas to Halleck was as follows:

> Your telegram of 12:30 P. M. to-day received. The ice having melted away to-day the enemy will be attacked to-morrow morning. Much as I regret the delay in attacking the enemy, it could not have been done before with any reasonable hope of success.[1]

The second telegram was from Van Duzer, Nashville, December 15, at 10:30 P. M., telling of the battle fought on that day and the great victory won. This message is historic, and is found at page 196, O. R., Serial No. 94. Great use was made of it and great rejoicing on the part of Eckert, Stanton, and Lincoln followed, of which Bates gives a graphic and picturesque account. On its being sent to Grant at Willard's he handed it to Beckwith with the remark: "I guess we will not go to Nashville." He, however, at once, 11:30 P. M., telegraphed Thomas:

> "I was just on my way to Nashville, but receiving a dispatch from Van Duzer, detailing your splendid success of to-day, I shall go no further."[2]

And fifteen minutes later he sent his congratulations to Thomas.

It was upon this historic setting on this forbidding background, so full of menace to the fortunes of General Thomas, that the decisive battle of Nashville was fought and won. Despite all the untoward and uncalled for "nagging" disclosed by the record, I make bold to say that the battle was fought without "unnecessary delay," just as Thomas all along

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 180.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 195.

promised, with the result he had so carefully planned for and so confidently anticipated. While prophecies after the fact are always easy, it is in the highest degree probable, tried by the facts actually developed in the course of the battle and by the experience of both armies, that if Thomas had made the attack, as ordered so peremptorily, upon Hood's strongly entrenched troops at any time prior to December 15, without waiting for reënforcements, and especially without the aid of "a respectable cavalry force," he would have met with a disastrous repulse. This, in fact, at first occurred everywhere along the line, both on the first and second days, except on the swinging flank, where McArthur's division and my cavalry were engaged. Grant had no right to assume that Thomas would have had any better luck in assaulting entrenchments, even though held by inferior numbers, than he had himself had in Virginia, or Hood at Franklin, or Lee at Gettysburg, or Sherman at Chickasaw Bluffs, or at Missionary Ridge, or throughout the Atlanta campaign, or than Grant himself on May 22, 1863, at Vicksburg. These lessons of frightful disaster had not been lost upon Thomas, a soldier of sound judgment, and always a close student of the military art. It is a notable fact, also, that the two most decisive assaults of the war were made by troops under Thomas's command at Missionary Ridge and again at Nashville. Some may say that my statement above, that even at Nashville the initial assaults on both days failed all along the line, except as the operation of my cavalry on the flank and rear made it easy, partakes of vainglory. I admit that it is a somewhat startling statement, and may be

new to many, but it is not at all vainglorious. It is the simple truth. I repeat it with great pride, but in justice to the heroic valor of the noble men "whose swords are rust and whose bones are dust," who so gloriously opened the road and showed the way to victory where others not less brave but less fortunate failed. As one among few survivors, nearly half a century later, it is the last service I can pay to the memory of my brave troops and the last expression of my gratitude for their unfaltering courage and support that I should make plain to all who read these lines, for all time, a truth resting not only upon my own observation and knowledge but upon the incontrovertible evidence of others, a truth that vindicates the judgment and the memory of the illustrious Thomas, that answers my own unfriendly critics, and that crowns the names of Hatch, Croxton, Knipe, and Johnson, and the heroic officers and men of their commands with imperishable glory.

It has been seen how large and free a use was made of my name and how prominent the necessary remount of my troops came to be in the issue between Thomas and his superiors in rank and authority. In view of the great part played by the cavalry in the battle, it will clearly appear that the flippant criticisms of Stanton and Halleck were even more uncalled for in my case than those made of Thomas by Grant. The latter, it is to be observed, nowhere echoed Stanton as Halleck did Thomas in the use of my name and to my prejudice, but always recognized the need and utility of an adequate cavalry force and did what he could to help Thomas and myself in resurrecting it from the wasted, scat-

tered, and run-down material with which, under the stress of severely adverse circumstances, we had to deal. Aside from the impatience of Grant, and the pressure from him, the mere fact of Hood's presence in front of our entrenchments was of itself sufficient, without urging from any quarter, to speed every one to his utmost. All the wisdom, experience, and skill of the veteran Thomas and every atom of the energy and ability of my being were brought to bear, day and night, in an unceasing effort to overcome our deficiencies and to be ready at the earliest opportune moment to strike a deadly blow.

Although the campaign just ended had been crowded with marching and fighting, exposure and privation, which had tried the nerves and endurance of all, the cavalry in the field, notwithstanding its inferiority in numbers, had successfully gained confidence and efficiency from the start. It felt instinctively that the day for numerous and unnecessary detachments, of desultory and inconclusive operations had gone by. The era of concentration and movements in mass had arrived. Both men and officers had fully caught the new spirit and showed by their bearing that they needed but to be correctly handled and intelligently looked after to give a better account of themselves than they had ever done before.

With the Seventh Ohio Cavalry scouting the north bank of the Cumberland as far down as Clarkesville, and Hammond's brigade as far up as Carthage, it was reasonably certain that Hood, even if he had so intended, could make no movement toward the invasion of Kentucky which we should

not promptly discover. Our central camp at Edgefield was thus left entirely quiet, and this afforded opportunity not only to rest and refit but to drill and reëstablish proper discipline and administration.

The first week of December was the busiest and most important period in the reorganization of the cavalry forces. Clothes were drawn for the men, the horses were rested, reshod and well fed, extra shoes were fitted, new arms were issued, old ones were repaired, and equipments of every kind were put in order. As fast as horses were received, they were issued where they would do the most good, and while they came in large numbers dismounted men from the rear came more rapidly in numbers sufficient to constitute two extra brigades of fifteen hundred men each. These were organized and used on foot as infantry till horses could be got for them.

On December 9, as a result of daily conferences, Thomas ordered me to break camp at Edgefield, to recross the Cumberland with my entire force, and to take position within the defenses of Nashville between the Hillsboro and Harding turnpikes so as to be ready to join in the attack against Hood the next day. But a heavy rain setting in about the time the movement should have begun my orders were countermanded till further notice. Rain, snow, and sleet in abundance followed by intense cold covered the ground that night with such a glare of snow and ice as to render it impossible to move cavalry not especially roughshod for the occasion. In fact, neither infantry nor cavalry could have made any progress whatever

over a battlefield so undulating and broken and so covered with ice and frozen snow as was that which separated our lines from those of the enemy. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the prevailing conditions made it necessary to suspend operations and were a full justification for every hour of delay that followed this remarkable storm. It was at its greatest intensity when Grant telegraphed positive orders directing Thomas to attack the enemy without further delay, and it was after it had spent its full force that Thomas, on the evening of December 10, invited his corps commanders to his headquarters for the purpose of reciting his orders, making known his reply, and asking their views as to the action he had taken entirely on his own responsibility in the emergency then at hand.

As I was the junior corps commander present, in years as well as in rank, it was my duty to speak first. Thomas laid before us Grant's orders and his reply thereto, and then stated that he had reached his decision and sent his answer absolutely upon his own judgment and merely wanted us to know what the situation was and what his sense of duty had demanded of him. He intimated that he would be glad to know that his action was in conformity with our views, but assured us in a tone of lofty dignity and resolution that he was prepared to take all the consequences of it upon his own shoulders, whatever they might be. With this manly declaration from the lips of our commander, I hastened to express my full approval of the course he had adopted and then added that, as I understood the plans, in which I fully concurred, the initial movements and maneuvers would naturally fall to

the cavalry and that it was my deliberate judgment that no hostile movement of any kind could be properly made either by infantry or cavalry till a thaw had set in and the ground and its covering had become sufficiently soft to enable both men and horses to make their way over it. I then declared that if my command held any part of Hood's position I would agree to defend it successfully against any force that could be sent against it with my own men armed with nothing more dangerous than baskets of brickbats, for I felt sure that the first volley discharged would set the men to dodging and slipping in such manner as to throw them into inextricable confusion.

It will be remembered that Hood occupied at that time a line of entrenchments on the tops of the Overton Hills, the sides of which were steep enough to make them difficult to surmount even if undefended. My remarks seemed so appropriate to the real situation that they were received with a smile of approval by my brother officers. Thomas J. Wood, commanding the Fourth Corps, was the next to speak. At the outbreak of the war he was the youngest cavalry colonel in the army, but he was a soldier of great experience and unfaltering courage. Much to my satisfaction he expressed his hearty concurrence in what I had said. A. J. Smith and Steedman were equally outspoken, and, as no one present denied or criticised my proposition or the conclusion drawn from it, and, as it was admitted by all that the success of our operations would depend largely upon the cavalry's turning movement, the meeting was shortly dissolved, and the officers dismissed to their quarters. Schofield, who

was present at the meeting, claims that, "without waiting for the junior members of the council," he immediately replied: "General Thomas, I will sustain you in your determination not to fight until you are fully ready."[1] But on the testimony of all who were present it is certain that Schofield's advice, whatever it was, must have been given in private. The fact is that upon this notable occasion he sat silent and by that means alone, if at all, he concurred in the judgment of those present that Thomas's course first and last was fully justified by the circumstances and conditions which confronted him. It was doubtless this silence that gave rise to the suspicion on the part of Steedman, and possibly of Thomas himself, that Schofield was already in touch with Grant or the War Department.

As the others were withdrawing Thomas asked me to remain for further conference, and this I did with great pleasure. As soon as we were alone he said, with much feeling:

"Wilson, the Washington authorities treat me as if I were a boy. They seem to think me incapable of planning a campaign or of fighting a battle, but if they will just let me alone till thawing weather begins and the ground is in condition for us to move at all I will show them what we can do. I am sure my plan of operations is correct, and that we shall lick the enemy, if he only stays to receive our attack."

Saying what I could to soothe Thomas's wounded feelings and to make it clear that Grant and Stanton could hardly understand the effects of

[1] "Forty-six Years in the Army," by Lieutenant General John M. Schofield, Century Co., p. 238.

the hard winter storm which had come upon us, without seeing them in person, I again expressed my approval of his plans and my entire confidence in our success if we did not throw our chances away by attacking prematurely. This done, I gradually led him into the discussion of other subjects and our conversation lasted till after supper. It was my custom to consider every question of organization and administration with him. He was an old West Point instructor who had devoted his entire life to the study of professional questions, and it was a rare opportunity for an officer of my age and lack of experience to invite his counsel and confidence. It was during an interview which took place a day or two after we had come within the defenses of Nashville that I told him of the disorganized and inefficient condition of the Tennessee cavalry regiments and of my intention to court-martial the officers absent from duty without authority, and to detail in their place field officers who could be spared from the depleted Northern regiments. It was upon that occasion that he suggested that I should call upon Andrew Johnson, then military governor of Tennessee, and ask for his coöperation. I have given an account elsewhere of what took place between us but I had had no suitable opportunity to explain the unfortunate result of the meeting to General Thomas. This I now did and in doing so raised a smile at the language I had used and the nerve which I had displayed. He expressed no surprise at Johnson's conduct nor at the course I had adopted without waiting for that official's concurrence, but fully agreed with me in my estimate of Johnson, as well as in the meas-

ures which I had taken to vitalize the Tennessee mounted regiments. He admitted that it was a great mistake on the part of the War Department to permit their organization at all, and encouraged me by his full approval of the course I had adopted.

I went to camp that night with a higher opinion of Thomas and his character than I had ever had before. He was by no means a rapid thinker or a brilliant conversationalist, but his mind was well stored with all sorts of military information and this was not all. He was an officer of unshakable resolution and of the highest character. His self-control was perfect, his bearing lofty and serene, and in all that he said and did he reminded me of the traditional Washington more than any man I had ever met.[1] He was a patriot without flaw and a soldier without reproach. He was as modest and as composed in his demeanor as any woman could have been, and yet he was not without the pride of conscious merit and did not hesitate to use strong and vigorous language when he thought he was improperly treated. He was as calm during the whole of this interview and as confident of victory as it was possible for a soldier to be. Withal he made it clear that he would not permit himself to be hurried into battle, but would lay down his commission rather than fight against his judgment or before he had done all in his power to complete his preparation and to insure victory.

And yet he could not forget the fact that Sher-

[1] Others, Admiral S. P. Lee for one, commanding our Mississippi Squadron, were similarly impressed. See also, "Recollections of the Civil War," C. A. Dana, pp. 124-125.

man, who had taken the pick and choice of the Western troops, including his own splendid Fourteenth Corps, was marching unopposed through the South, while the enemy he should have destroyed before starting on his holiday excursion had assumed the offensive and was now confronting us at Nashville within a line of circumvallating entrenchments which all experience admonished us were inexpugnable if properly defended. He commented on this more than once during the so-called siege with bitterness and resentment. But badly as he felt about it he felt still worse in regard to Grant's impatient and inconsiderate orders to fight without further delay. Generals, however great, are but men after all, and, while Thomas was always composed and dignified, he would have been more than human had he not referred to the fact that Grant, with an army of nearly a hundred thousand men, mostly seasoned veterans, had been confronting Lee at Petersburg for seven months, while Hood had been confronting us at Nashville for only ten days. The deadlock in Virginia was far more complete than in Tennessee. Lee, as if in contempt of Grant's generalship, had made detachments to Lynchburg and the valley of Virginia, thus greatly weakening his main army, and while those diversions had in the end come to grief Grant had not been able to avail himself of them for a successful counter attack against the enemy in his own front, but had finally settled down into a listless deadlock which continued substantially till the first of April, the next year. Under the circumstances, which were well known to the entire army, it was hard for Thomas, who was conceded to be a better technical soldier and organizer than either

Grant or Sherman, to understand why he should be censured and lectured by either of them. Both were far away, as well as more or less ignorant of the actual condition of affairs in our front, and both more or less responsible for the perils by which we were surrounded. Thomas felt all this most keenly, but, with a reticence which was one of his greatest characteristics, he contented himself with recounting it to me, possibly with the hope that I might use it in some way for his justification, though he did not intimate that I should use it then or at any future time. He knew my intimacy with Grant and his staff, and evidently had confidence in my judgment, and, therefore, contented himself with the final declaration that the authorities might relieve him from command and put some one else in his place, in which case he would do all in his power to help him out, but that in no case would he fight against his own judgment, or till local conditions should become more favorable. For the adoption of this course, the events which followed were a full justification, but it is a curious circumstance that, although Grant afterward went so far as to admit that he was wrong and Thomas was right in not fighting till the weather had moderated and the thaw had come, neither he nor Sherman ever fully or fairly withdrew the charge that Thomas was slow at Nashville.[1]

On the evening of December 11 the weather moderated and the ice which covered the hills and fields began to melt. It required but a few hours

[1] On this interesting topic the critical reader should consult General Boynton's little book: "Was General Thomas Slow at Nashville?" &c. Frances P. Harper, New York, 1896.

in that climate to clear and soften the ground so that troops could move without danger. By the next morning I began crossing to the south side of the river, and before night had taken up the position assigned to me, ready to attack as soon as the word should be received. By the night of the 14th all my near-by detachments had been called in and every arrangement within my own control had been completed, and, what is still better, both officers and men showed every confidence of victory.

The plan of battle, as fully explained to all, required the cavalry to advance on the right of the infantry, conform to its movements, drive the enemy from the bank of the Cumberland at Bell's Landing as well as from the Charlotte and Harding turnpikes, turn and envelop the enemy's left flank, and, if possible, strike him in the rear. In arranging to carry out these instructions, I conferred with A. J. Smith, whose corps had been holding that portion of our line between the Hillsboro turnpike and the river, pointing out clearly that he should reach his point of passage through our entrenchments in such a way as not to encumber the ground over which the cavalry would have to operate. As the result of this conference, Smith assured me that the division on my right should march to the left by the rear of my command inside the entrenchments.

In order that there should be no mistake as to what was expected of them, I personally showed my division and brigade commanders the ground over which they were to advance, assembled them at my headquarters, and verbally reiterated my instructions. To make sure that there should be no mis-

understanding, I then furnished each with a written copy of the orders for his government.

I had three divisions and one extra brigade in hand ready for the attack. The Fifth Division under Hatch held the left and was directed to sally from the fortifications on the Harding turnpike, its left flank connecting with Smith's infantry and its right flank moving by the turnpike. As soon as Smith had carried the enemy's position in his front, Hatch was to swing to the left, enveloping the enemy's flank and taking him in reverse.

Croxton's brigade of the First Division, the other two being still absent in pursuit of Lyon, was ordered to conform to the movement on his left.

R. W. Johnson's Sixth Division, one brigade mounted, the other having no horses, was directed to clear the Charlotte turnpike of the enemy, to keep in touch with Croxton, and to push on as far as Davidson's House, eight miles from the city, so as to cover the movement of the cavalry behind it from a counter attack by the enemy.

Knipe's Seventh Division, one brigade mounted and the other without horses, was directed to debouch from our entrenchments on the Harding turnpike and advance in readiness to reënforce any portion of the general advance which might require it. Although the plan of operations was plain and simple, a staff officer was told off to each division to see that everyone was in his place and did his part in conformity with the general plan of operations. As the entire battlefield was composed of plowed land and heavily timbered hills, all were directed to leave their transportation behind and to take nothing with them except the artillery, the

teams of which should be doubled. The entire force consisted of something over nine thousand mounted men and three thousand dismounted. McCook had not returned.

With all arrangements complete and the cavalry in bivouac on the commons inside of the entrenchments fronting the ground on which they were to advance the next day, I withdrew to my own tent and wrote, at 11:40 P. M., December 14, 1864, to a friend at Grant's headquarters as follows:

> . . . Everybody else has made his last will and testament or written to his wife or sweetheart, but, having nothing to dispose of, and neither wife nor sweetheart to write to, I give you about four minutes before preparing myself for four or five hours of sleep.
>
> All arrangements are made for battle in the morning, and much seems in our favor. If we are ordinarily successful, and Hood ordinarily complacent, we shall have but little time for letter writing during the next two weeks. The weather has moderated, the rebels are quiescent, and our troops in good condition. . . .

Everything was astir, breakfast was over, and the cavalry corps ready to move out by daylight the next morning, but, owing to a dense fog which followed the change in the weather, the cavalry as well as the infantry was compelled to delay the advance till half past eight, by which time it had cleared sufficiently to enable each organization to move against the enemy as directed. In spite, however, of every precaution, McArthur's division of Smith's corps, instead of marching to its position on the left by my rear, as Smith had promised, deliberately crossed my front, thereby delaying not only my advance but the advance of the rest of the

army till nearly ten o'clock. Had the enemy been specially alert, this unnecessary delay might have greatly deranged our plan of attack. As it was it cost the entire army an hour and a half, which, in the short days of December, could ill be spared, and might have been of inestimable value in our operations of that afternoon.

Simultaneously with the advance of the infantry, the cavalry moved out as directed, though Hatch's division was further delayed after beginning its march by the fact that McArthur's infantry still blocked its way. Finally having got a clear road, it advanced rapidly under the cover of a strong line of skirmishers. Brushing away the enemy's pickets, it soon encountered Ector's brigade of infantry on the farther side of Richland Creek, strongly entrenched on commanding ground. Without a moment's hesitation, Stewart's brigade threw itself headlong against the enemy, broke through his line, and drove him rapidly beyond Harding's House.

In this attack, the Twelfth Tennessee Cavalry, which I had placed under the command of Colonel George Spalding, of Michigan, charged the enemy in the most gallant manner, capturing Chalmers's headquarters, baggage, papers, and records, forty-three prisoners, and fourteen wagons, all of which was exceedingly gratifying because it fully vindicated my action in putting a Northern field officer in charge of a Tennessee regiment.

Having by this brilliant operation cleared his front and put the enemy's cavalry to flight, Hatch pushed his first brigade by flank rapidly to the left to join his second brigade. This done, the division found itself on the flank of a four-gun battery,

posted in a redoubt which formed the left of the enemy's position. Sending his own battery "I," First Illinois Light Artillery, still farther to the right to a position from which it could enfilade the enemy's entrenchments, Hatch threw forward Coon's brigade, dismounted, broke through the enemy's infantry, and captured the redoubt with four guns. Turning the captured guns upon the enemy occupying a higher hill farther on, Hatch promptly threw forward his second brigade, supported by his first, and swept over a second redoubt, capturing four guns and two hundred and fifty prisoners. This operation was conducted in sight of the infantry, which had never seen dismounted cavalry assault a fortified position before. To men less brave and determined than these dismounted horsemen it would have seemed like madness to attack such entrenchments, but armed with magazine carbines the strong line of skirmishers made light of the work before them. In spite of the steep acclivity and of the withering fire both of artillery and musketry, the dismounted cavalrymen swept over the next redoubt and, putting the enemy to flight, captured still another four-gun battery which the enemy abandoned in the valley beyond. It was now almost dark, and the cavalrymen, having been fighting on foot swinging on a long radius from hill to hill, over rough and muddy ground, had become exceedingly fatigued. Besides, night was at hand, and Hatch was, therefore, directed to bring forward his horses and bivouac on the Hillsboro turnpike, connecting with Schofield's right and covering it from the enemy.

Knipe's mounted brigade had conformed to

Hatch's movement, striking the Hillsboro pike at the six-mile post. Three-quarters of a mile farther out, he turned up a branch of Richland Creek and, just at dark, struck the Granny White turnpike still farther around, where he found himself in rear of the enemy's line.

The cavalry operations still farther to our right had been equally successful. Croxton's brigade and Johnson's division, although delayed by McArthur's infantry, had found the enemy posted behind Richland Creek, but, pressing him vigorously in front and flank, they brushed him quickly out of the way. Croxton, after following him several miles, also turned to the left, skirmishing heavily with the enemy, and finally went into bivouac near the sixth mile post on the Hillsboro turnpike. Both he and Johnson had swept everything before them, thus making it easy to concentrate the entire mounted force within supporting distance of each other on the left and rear of the enemy's position.

From this condensed account, it will be seen from the map that the cavalry corps had driven back the enemy's entire left wing an average of over four miles, and had placed itself in a position from which it was enabled to renew the attack against the enemy's left and rear the next day with deadly effect.

It was an unusual day's work for cavalry. For the first time on any American battlefield all the available mounted force, a full army corps in strength, were massed on the flank of an advancing army, making a turning movement of the first importance against an enemy occupying a strongly fortified position. For the first time in our country

the horsemen on foot had charged side by side with the infantry, carrying the enemy's entrenchments, taking his field guns, and capturing the detachments told off for their support. For the first time they had planted themselves in force behind the enemy's flank on one of his main lines of retreat in exactly the position for which they had started. The night was, however, so cloudy and dark, the country so broken, and the troops so fatigued, that a further advance that night was impossible. There was nothing for the cavalry to do but to make their bivouac sure. Having done this, they slept without unsaddling and were ready at the earliest dawn to resume operations. Having seen that they were invincible in coöperating masses, they believed themselves sure of victory the next day, and, with this exultant feeling, they rested, though most uncomfortably, till the next morning.

Having made my dispositions for the night, I rode to Thomas's headquarters, which I found on the turnpike, a mile or so outside the fortifications surrounding Nashville. He received me with compliments which might well have made an older and better soldier blush. His only regret was for the fog and the delay which had occurred from the blunder of McArthur's division. He felt that, if our movement could have begun at seven o'clock instead of at ten, we should have had three hours more daylight and might have finished up our work and routed the enemy before dark. He was well satisfied, however, with the day's work and still more confident than ever that we should achieve a complete victory the next day. Thanking me again for the services of the cavalry and expressing his confi-

dence with still greater emphasis in the final result, he directed me to resume operations without change of plan, and to press the enemy's flank and rear as soon as I could see to move, with all the force I could bring to bear.[1]

Shortly after dawn of the 16th, the enemy drove in Hammond's pickets and took possession of the Granny White pike. This was the initial movement of the day, but Hammond, a gallant soldier, realizing the importance of that turnpike, without waiting for orders threw out the dismounted men of his entire brigade, drove the enemy back in turn, and regained firm possession of the turnpike. The fighting was sharp and determined, but its results were encouraging from the first. Hammond now had the most exposed position, but at the first sound of his carbines Hatch, to the left, pushed forward his whole dismounted force and joined in the attack on the enemy's left and rear. We were in the midst of the Brentwood Hills, densely covered with underbrush and broken by fences which made the wooded country entirely impracticable for mounted men. The front covered by my fighting line was about a mile and a half in length. Its advance was diagonally across the Granny White pike, inclining toward Nashville. Croxton's brigade was near at hand, ready to support either Hatch or Hammond, while Johnson's division was making its way on a greater arc across country to the Hillsboro turnpike. But the enemy held on stubbornly, and it looked for a while as though the cavalry might do more to annoy the enemy if it were on the other

[1] Schofield also called on Thomas that night and received similar orders. "Forty-six Years in the Army," p. 244.

flank. At 10:10 A. M. I wrote Schofield and spoke with Thomas to that effect.[1]

But by noon our skirmishers, not less than four thousand in number, had pushed their way slowly through the underbrush and woods up the hills in a curved line from Schofield's right, across the Granny White pike, to a position parallel with the enemy's line and facing Nashville. There was no longer any uncertainty as to which flank we ought to be on, for all was now going well. Led and directed by their gallant officers, the men of the two divisions, skirmishing heavily, pressed the enemy steadily back from the start at every point.

In the midst of the heaviest fighting, one of our detachments captured a courier from Hood, carrying a dispatch to Chalmers, directing him "for God's sake to drive the Yankee cavalry from our left and rear or all is lost."[2] Regarding this dispatch as of the first importance, I sent it at once to Thomas without even making a copy of it. Having already informed both Thomas and Schofield by courier of my success and of the steady progress my troopers were making, I sent three staff officers, one after the other, urging Schofield to attack the enemy in front and finish up the day's work with victory. But nothing whatever was done as yet from the right of the infantry line to support my movement. Finally, fearing that nothing would be done, and that night would come on again before the

[1] Schofield's "Forty-six Years in the Army," p. 264.

[2] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 693, Forrest's Inspector-General to Jackson, "The enemy . . . at 2 o'clock were attempting to turn our left flank." *Ib.*, 697, Stewart to Walthall, "It is important to check the force operating against our left flank."

enemy could be shaken out of his position, by the efforts of the dismounted cavalry alone, I rode around the enemy's left flank to Thomas's headquarters, which I found on the turnpike about two miles from my own. This was between three and four o'clock, and, as it was a cloudy, rainy day, it was already growing dark. Thomas and Schofield were standing together on the reverse side of a small hill, over the top of which the enemy's line on a still higher elevation could be plainly seen less than a mile away. What was of still more importance was that my dismounted men, with their guidons fluttering in the air, flanked and covered by two batteries of horse artillery, were in plain sight moving against the left and rear of the enemy's line. Shots from their batteries aimed too high but passing over the enemy's heads were falling in front of Schofield's corps. And yet he gave no orders to advance. Pointing out the favorable condition of affairs, I urged Thomas, with ill-concealed impatience, to order the infantry forward without further delay. Still the stately chieftain was unmoved. Apparently doubting that the situation could be as I represented it, he lifted his field glasses and coolly scanned what I clearly showed him. It was a stirring sight, and, gazing at it, as I thought, with unnecessary deliberation, he finally satisfied himself. Pausing only to ask me if I was sure that the men entering the left of the enemy's works above us were mine, and receiving the assurance that I was dead certain of it, he turned to Schofield and as calmly as if on parade directed him to move to the attack with his entire corps.

Fully realizing that the crisis was now on, I

galloped as rapidly as my good gray, Sheridan, could carry me back to my own command, but when I reached its front the enemy had already broken and was in full but disorderly retreat by the only turnpike left in his possession. This was shortly after 4 P. M.

The dismounted troopers had closed in upon the enemy's entrenchments and entered them from the rear before the infantry reached them in front. They had captured fifteen more field guns, thus bringing their score up to twenty-seven for the two days, and had picked up several hundred prisoners. Without permitting them to delay for the trophies of battle, I directed them to turn over both guns and prisoners to the infantry, while they went for their horses and mounted for the pursuit. Hatch, Knipe, and Hammond, full of enthusiasm, did their best to carry these instructions into effect, while Croxton, still some distance to the right, mounted in hot haste and pushed forward to and through Brentwood. It was now raining heavily, mist was gathering, and dark was closing down like a pall over both victor and vanquished.

As on the day previous, the ground was not only soft but heavily overgrown with timber and underbrush. The distance which separated the dismounted troopers from their led horses was considerable, and although every man hurried as though his life was at stake it was pitch dark before they were remounted and in pursuit. Not a minute was unnecessarily lost, but rapid movements across rough country and plowed fields in the dark were impossible. The only chance was to follow the turnpikes, and we had not yet reached, nor were there

any crossroads to the Franklin pike, which was the main artery of Hood's connections with the rear. The Granny White pike was in our hands, but its junction with the Franklin pike was at Hollowtree Gap, a strong position five miles farther toward Franklin, which made it necessary that the broken and retreating columns of the enemy should clear that point before we reached it. But the enthusiasm of victory was now all on our side. "There was mounting in hot haste" and, although it was so dark that our troopers could hardly see their horses' ears, Hammond and Hatch, in the order named, led their gallant horsemen in headlong pursuit. It was now raining hard and the rain was gradually turning into sleet. The night was cold and dismal, but both officers and men felt that the opportunity was all they could expect and that no effort should be spared to gather the fruits of victory. They noted the low roll of thunder, which they may have mistaken for the roar of distant cannon, and they were grateful for the momentary flashes of lightning, which showed them the highway and fitfully lit up the landscape on either hand, giving them a sight here and there of straggling detachments of the enemy hurrying to the rear.

Again the slowness of the infantry from the right of our line had cost us the hour of daylight which would have enabled us to make our victory complete. Hood, foreseeing the disaster about to overtake him, and making it known to Chalmers and to us alike, by his despairing cry, with the experience of an old soldier, had evidently held on till the last minute in the expectation that darkness would enable him, by a hurrying retreat, to reach Franklin,

less than eight miles away, and put the Harpeth between him and us before daylight.

But the Confederate chieftain had, quite unknown to us, committed a second and still more grievous error, which had so far escaped our observation. Although many stragglers were picked up and hastily examined by the proper officers, it was soon discovered that they all belonged to Chalmers's cavalry or to the infantry of Hood's army, and none to Jackson's or Buford's cavalry. Besides, nothing was seen or heard of the redoubtable Forrest himself. He was not on the field or we should have certainly known it before. The rattle of his repeater, the clang of his saber, and the shout of his clarion voice were absent from the racket and fighting which made that night so memorable.[1]

We had not heard of Forrest's absence before, for, being north of the river or encircled by the entrenchments of Nashville, we had no means of learning what was going on behind the hills or in the enemy's camps. But after the fighting of the second day was all over and silence had followed "the noise of the captains and the shouting," it became certain that Forrest was absent from the battle. A day or two later we learned to our surprise that he had been sent by Hood, December 6, with two divisions of cavalry and Walthall's division of infantry, to capture Murfreesboro on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, some two days' march to the southeast. This detachment, amounting to about a quarter of the entire investing army, was an in-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 202 *et seq.*, Wilson's orders. *Ib.*, Thomas to McCook. *Ib.*, p. 699, Hood to Seddon.

excusable violation of all the rules of war. While it cannot be said with certainty that, had Forrest been present with this force united with that of Chalmers, on the left of Hood's line he would have been able to hold it, it may well be claimed that he could have made a better and more stubborn defense than was made by Chalmers and Ector alone.

Our mounted force was at least equal if not superior to Hood's and, coöperating with the infantry against a long line of entrenchments but poorly manned, we should doubtless have broken through, but with Forrest also resisting us we should have had much more difficult work and could hardly have pushed our turning movement far enough to reach, drive back, and take in reverse Hood's main line of defense for a mile and a half as we did. When it is remembered that every infantry attack against Hood's center and right on both days of the battle had been at first repulsed and that neither Schofield nor Smith fired a shot on the second day till after our dismounted men were seen entering the enemy's entrenchments from the left and rear, it may well be believed that had the cavalry's assault and turning movement also failed our general plan would have been defeated. According to all the rules of war, the cavalry was fully justified in claiming, as it always did, that, but for the part they took in the two days' battle, the Confederate army would have maintained its position and the investment would have been indefinitely prolonged.[1]

Meanwhile, the Confederate commander had committed his final and fatal mistake and had lost out

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, see especially Hood to Seddon, p. 699; also Beauregard to Cooper, p. 768.

forever. His flank was turned and taken in reverse and his line was irretrievably broken. The most he could hope to do now was to save his army by flight from total destruction and capture. And in this his most potent allies were darkness, rain, snow, sleet, mud, and rising rivers, all of which he was to have in succession for the next two weeks. With the beginning of darkness he was in full retreat along the two turnpikes and we were thundering at his heels. While Hatch, Hammond, and Croxton, with more men than they could properly use in the dark on a single road, were charging every semblance of a rear guard with no guide but an occasional flash of lightning showing the white surface of the turnpike, and no knowledge of the enemy's position but that given by the blazing of his pistols and carbines, Johnson pushed down the Hillsboro pike for the purpose of crossing the Harpeth and swinging into Franklin from the west, if possible, before Hood could pass beyond that point.

Our contact was at first with the disorganized Confederate infantry. In spite of our capture of Hood's dispatch to Chalmers in the afternoon, Chalmers had doubtless received a copy of it or had got instructions direct from Hood, for, according to the Confederate accounts, he had hastened with Rucker and Kelly, just before the break took place, to the rear on the Granny White pike for the purpose of standing us off. He had selected a favorable position for felling trees and had constructed a barricade of brush, logs, and fence-rails behind which to hold on while the infantry passed to the rear. This accounts for the fact that, after sweeping the broken Confederate infantry from the road,

the head of our column ran into a strong defensive line a couple of miles further on. Without pausing to ascertain who or what it was, the gallant troopers formed front into line and dashed headlong in the thick darkness against the layout which barred their way. The blaze of the enemy's carbines plainly indicated its extent and one of the fiercest conflicts occurred that ever took place in the Civil War. The brunt of the Confederate defense fell upon Colonel Rucker with a small brigade composed mostly of Tennesseeans. As if by design, though it was purely an accident, the leader of Hatch's column was the same Colonel Spalding who broke the Confederate line on the Harding pike the day before. At the first dash, he found himself and his command inextricably mixed up in a hand to hand fight in which no man could distinguish friend from foe. But all did their best with pistol shot and saber stroke to clear the ground they had gained. In the midst of the clash a clear voice rang out: "Who are you, anyhow?" The answer came back in defiance: "I am Colonel George Spalding, commanding the Twelfth Tennessee Cavalry," thereupon Rucker rushed at Spalding, grabbing at his rein, and calling out fiercely: "Well, you are my prisoner, for I am Colonel Ed Rucker, commanding the Twelfth Tennessee Rebel Cavalry!" "Not by a damned sight," shouted the Union colonel, and giving his horse the spur, with a front cut in the dark, he broke the grip of his antagonist and instantly freed himself.

By some strange chance, at this instant Captain Joseph C. Boyer of Spalding's regiment also became engaged with Rucker. He had heard both challenge and answer and pushed boldly in to assist his

colonel in the blackness of the night, fighting to the front like the hero he was. Without knowing exactly how it came about, Boyer closed in upon Rucker, wresting his saber from his hand, while Rucker, in turn, grabbed Boyer's saber from him. Then occurred one of the most remarkable incidents of the war, for, while the sturdy combatants were whacking each other with exchanged sabers, a pistol shot from an unknown hand broke Rucker's sword arm and thus disabled him, compelling him to surrender at discretion. Just which of his assailants actually captured him is unknown, but the sword which he had used so well fell to Spalding's lot and was sent to Monroe, Michigan, where it remained for twenty-five years a cherished trophy of the War for the Union.

When the gallant deeds of that night had become a pleasant memory of their declining years, Spalding and Rucker met in the course of business or pleasure, and this led to friendly relations and correspondence, the result of which was that Spalding, then a banker and a member of Congress, returned the captured sword to Rucker, who had become a most distinguished citizen, a capitalist, and a manufacturer at Birmingham, in the iron district of Alabama.

Later, during the confused and frenzied night fighting on the Granny White pike, Colonel Benjamin Gresham of the Tenth Indiana Cavalry, brother of General Walter Q. Gresham, afterwards United States Judge and Secretary of State in Cleveland's cabinet, while charging a fence-rail layout farther to the right, also became engaged in a hand to hand conflict, in which he was struck from his horse and

had five ribs broken by a crushing blow from a clubbed rifle in the hands of a sturdy Confederate. All along the line and down the crowded road similar incidents took place and similar fighting made the night one of the most exciting of the war. It was a scene of pandemonium, in which flashing carbines, whistling bullets, bursting shells, and the imprecations of struggling men filled the air.

My own staff, carried away by the excitement, threw themselves into the mêlée nominally to see and report, but really to lend a hand. Followed by their orderlies, with drawn saber and flashing repeater, one and all rushed into the fight and were soon bringing back prisoners and recounting their adventures. There were neither laggards nor horse-holders that night. Every officer and man, mounted and eager for the fray, did his full duty in the headlong rush which broke line after line, carried layout after layout, captured gun after gun, and finally drove Chalmers and his gallant horsemen from the field, in hopeless rout and confusion. They had stood their ground bravely, but were overborne at every turn and at every stand by the weight and fury of the Union onset.

The victory was all we could wish, but by the time the fighting was over and the enemy had at last disappeared into the darkness, which prevented wholesale capture, it was nearly midnight and my own columns were badly scattered. Although flushed with success and still anxious to continue the fray, they had been marching and fighting, dismounted and mounted, skirmishing and charging the enemy's works, capturing his guns, and pursuing in hopeless confusion for nearly eighteen hours. They had

no time to eat or feed after dawn, but with the certainty of victory, they cheerfully answered every call made upon them. Hungry and tired and badly needing rest, nothing could stop them as long as the enemy was in sight. Sustained by the splendid work they were doing and the splendid results they had gained, I was probably the only officer in the command fresh enough to keep the saddle and to continue the pursuit. I needed neither rest nor refreshment, but realizing that we were in a strange stretch of country, the features and accidents of which were unknown to us, I concluded, just before midnight, to sound the recall, to send out word for each command to bivouac where orders overtook it, and to take up the advance at the first sign of dawn the next morning.

No other pursuit of the war had been so promptly begun nor pushed so far without pause or halt, and while we might have done more had we had moonlight or even starlight, instead of rain, sleet, cold, and the thick darkness of a winter's night, there seemed to me nothing else for us to do under the circumstances but to halt and rest as best we might for a few uncomfortable hours.

It had been an exciting day and night for me as well as for the command. My policy of concentrating and operating in masses instead of detachments had received a signal vindication. Thomas's delay, in order that this policy might be carried out, had been fully justified, but I had received no orders after parting with him and he had ordered Schofield to move out. Indeed, I needed none. The merest tyro would have known what to do, but shortly after I got well under way that night down the Granny

White pike in pursuit of the enemy, I heard the heavy gallop of horses on the macadam behind me and as it came nearer and clearer the intuition flashed through my mind that it might be Thomas galloping to overtake me. It was too dark to see or to recognize anyone, but reining up my horse and pulling him toward the side of the road, a heavy figure loomed up abreast of me, calling out: "Is that you, Wilson?" Recognizing the voice I halted instantly and answered: "Yes, General Thomas!" By the time these words were out, the dignified commander, for it was he indeed and no one else, shouted so that he might have been heard a quarter of a mile: "Dang it to hell, Wilson, didn't I tell you we could lick 'em, didn't I tell you we could lick 'em?"

With scarcely a pause for my reply, the General wheeled about and galloped for Nashville, with a word of praise for the cavalry. He disappeared in the darkness shouting: "Continue the pursuit as far as you can to-night and resume it as early as you can to-morrow morning."

While Thomas was famed as one of the most reserved as well as one of the most dignified of men, this incident makes it certain that he had been deeply wounded by the impatience of those above him and after all he was but human. He had told me, it will be recalled, at the personal interview on the night of the council with his corps commanders, that he was sure we should "lick Hood" if we were allowed to choose our time and fight him under favorable circumstances, and it was but natural that he should ride out after the battle was won to remind me that he had told me so. While he never used profane language, it must be noted that upon this

occasion he said "dang it" with all the vehemence of an old dragoon. This was the nearest approach I ever heard him make to actual profanity.

My quartermaster having selected a house by the roadside for a hospital, I occupied it also with my staff as soon as I had given the necessary orders for the night. Rucker was among the wounded who had found shelter there, and had been assigned to a bed in my room. His arm had been so badly shattered that my staff surgeon had amputated it before I got there. Of course, every attention possible under the circumstances was extended to the gallant sufferer, who was made as comfortable as our field resources would permit. He was, however, more or less excited and wakeful, while I was compelled to receive dispatches, send out orders, and make arrangements for the next morning. Under such conditions neither of us slept much, but as Rucker's excitement wore away and my business was dispatched, we both fell into silence and may have caught an hour's restful sleep, but I was up and out by dawn, while Hammond, Hatch, and Croxton, without urging, were spurring to the front.

## IV

## DRIVING HOOD FROM MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Hollowtree Gap—Affair at the West Harpeth—Forrest takes the rear—Charge of the Fourth Cavalry—Delay at Rutherford Creek and Duck River—Cheers of the infantry—Winter floods and ice—Croxton routs Buford—Enemy makes only counter attack—End of campaign—McCook drives Lyon from Kentucky—Summary of campaign and results.

During the night of December 16 the enemy improvised a new rear guard which had taken up a strong position at Hollowtree Gap, near the junction of the two turnpikes. But with daylight, although it was both foggy and rainy, to say nothing of cold, it was easy to find his flanks. The country was now open and, although the fields were knee-deep in mud, we soon doubled him up and sent him whirling down the road, across the Harpeth River, through Franklin and out on the turnpike toward Spring Hill and Columbia. Chalmers made a gallant stand and compelled us to develop a full front, thus gaining precious time, but the weight of numbers and the impulse of confidence were now with us and nothing could withstand our onset. We had at last struck country which we knew and over which we could move with confidence, so long as we kept on the

turnpike. But the slightest departure from it into the open fields at once involved us in difficulty and delay, and thus it was for the next two weeks.

Johnson's division, marching by a half circle and crossing the Harpeth lower down, had been delayed and, unfortunately, did not reach Franklin till after the enemy had swept beyond it. The morning's work gave us four hundred and thirteen prisoners, including two colonels, two lieutenant colonels, three colors, and many stragglers, together with two thousand of the enemy's and two hundred of our own sick and wounded, whom we found in the hospitals at Franklin. Without making a detachment to care for them we left them behind, as the cavalry frequently did, to swell the trophies of the infantry, while my five mounted brigades, for the first time united into a compact mass nearly ten thousand strong, pushed cheerfully to the front.

After the victory at Hollowtree Gap Knipe forded the Harpeth at Franklin, while Hatch and Croxton did the same at the crossings above the town, through which they had driven Forrest a fortnight before. With the whole corps now well in hand, Croxton on the Lewisburg pike to the left, Hatch and Knipe in parallel column followed the Columbia pike, while Johnson turned down the Carter's Creek pike to the right. These were divergent roads, but I hoped that the outer columns at least could march rapidly enough to pass around the flank of the enemy, while Hatch and Knipe, pressing him on the central highway, would compel him to halt and form line frequently throughout the day.

By these means I expected to bring him to a stand and capture or scatter his last organized force

and make prisoners of the broken and flying mass it was covering. The prize was a great one, and my subordinates, realizing this as fully as I did, responded to every order with alacrity and precision. But the enemy, finding his flanks constantly endangered, retired so rapidly under the cover of his infantry skirmish line that all our efforts to bring him to bay failed till the day was almost spent. It was killing work for both sides. The rain was still pouring and the fields on both sides of the roads were soaking wet, so that both retreating Confederates and following Union men had all they could do to get forward without the delay of fighting.

Late in the evening, after a dense fog and the shades of coming night had darkened the scene, the rebel rear guard, apparently exhausted by its toilsome march, threw itself into a strong position in the open fields about two miles north of the west Harpeth and with a battery so placed as to sweep the turnpike, gave unmistakable evidence of a determination to stay our further progress. It made a sullen but brave array, the first of the kind we had seen during the pursuit, and this showed that a master mind had taken charge.

At it turned out, Forrest, having been recalled from Murfreesboro at the first sign of disaster, had rejoined the retreating army that afternoon and, assisted by Walthall, a sturdy, stately soldier, afterward for many years a distinguished senator from Mississippi, had assumed the task of covering the retreat. He had put himself, with a noble disregard of danger, at the disposition of his disheartened chief and, although it is believed that from that day he despaired of the Confederacy, he willingly put

forth all his powers to restore confidence and save the wreck of the retreating army. But he was now playing a new rôle, and one he was destined to play to the end of the drama. Hitherto, his part had been with the advance; henceforth it was to be with the retreat.

In the gloom which was now rapidly settling upon both sides, Hatch's advancing detachments had become so intermingled with the sullen and disorganized enemy that, doubting the force in front was really the rebel rear guard, Hatch hesitated to order the charge. The delay which followed, though scarcely perceptible, gave Forrest time to swing his battery in position and strengthen the weak points of his line, but, fortunately, I was close enough to see plainly that the soldiers at the front, although clad in bluish overcoats, were really the enemy. Our own men, well closed up, were ready for the fray. Without an instant's hesitation, I ordered my bugler to sound the charge, sang out for Hatch and Knipe to advance on both flanks, and ordered Lieutenant Hedges, commanding my escort, the Fourth Regular Cavalry two hundred strong, in column of platoons, to charge the enemy's center, head on with drawn sabers. Hedges was a true hero, and with only enough hesitation to satisfy himself as to what was really required, dashed to the front, with the regulars thundering at his heels down the turnpike. He had hardly got fairly under way when the enemy opened on him with canister at point blank range, but failed to check his onset. Hatch's Chicago Board of Trade battery, always in the advance, replied from the roadside and, under its diagonal fire sweeping the ground to the front, the

regulars broke through the enemy's line, sabering the cannoneers and forcing the guns to withdraw at the gallop, while Hatch's division and Hammond's brigade with their deadly Spencers swept the rest of the field before them, overthrowing both flanks and driving the whole line from its chosen position to the other side of the west Harpeth in the utmost disorder. Hedges, outstripping his men, was captured three times, but waving his hat and yelling as though frightened out of his wits: "The Yankees are upon us, run for your lives," succeeded in escaping in the confusion and rejoining his command before his men missed him from the front.

The rout was instantaneous and complete and, although friend and foe were at once intermingled, every man striking and shouting at whomsoever or whatsoever he saw, the whole command pressed rapidly to the front as best it could without hesitation or delay. It was a scene of wild excitement, but Hammond had, fortunately, struck a path leading to a ford by which he crossed the west Harpeth, although it was dark as Erebus. Realizing from the musketry that he was on the flank of a new line, he led his gallant followers headlong into the darkness and, overthrowing everything before them, picked up many infantry prisoners, together with the battery Hedges had sent galloping to the rear.

It was another running night fight, in which all semblance of order was lost, where regiment got separated from regiment, troop from troop, and officers from men. There was no guide but the turnpike, and no rule but "when you hear a voice, shoot" or "see a head hit it." The game was with us now

to our heart's content, and while everybody was filled with enthusiasm, there was nothing to do in the darkness and confusion which closed the scene but to direct division and brigade commanders when they could be found to sound the recall. There was no danger that any one would pull up too soon. As a matter of fact, the pursuit was kept up till both men and horses were so blown that they could go no farther into the darkness.

It is worthy of note that Hood's rear guard, or what there was left of it, bivouacked that night near Stanley's old camp at Spring Hill, from four to five miles from the scene of conflict, while the various divisions and brigades of the Cavalry Corps halted, wet and hungry, at such places on the turnpike as seemed to be the least disagreeable. They were completely out of rations and forage, and on Sancho Panza's proverb, which is so often the cavalryman's only consolation, that "he who sleeps eats," both sides threw themselves on the ground, the weary to rest and the wounded to suffer without relief.

As the entire country from Nashville to the Tennessee had been fought and foraged over by the contending armies, it had been swept about clean of food for man and beast, and this was the second day of the pursuit. Literally, there was nothing for men and horses of either side but to go hungry.

The enemy, having nothing to cook, lit out by daylight. There was, indeed, no choice for them but to imitate the French in the retreat from Moscow—to take a drink, tighten their belts, and hit the road to the rear at the best gait they could make. It was but little better with the victors, and so both

sides were under way as soon as it was light enough to see their hands before them. Both put forth their best efforts, but with the Confederates on the direct turnpike hurrying to Columbia, with no thought of making a stand again till they were safely beyond Duck River, there was but little fighting that day.

Marching as we were through densely wooded country or fallow fields, by muddy roads, almost impassable from constant rains and rising streams, it was impossible for our flanking brigades to get around the enemy while he was sticking to the turnpike and taking his best gait to the rear.

It was easy enough for the advance guard of our main column to keep in touch with the enemy's rear guard, but before we could form front into line he would withdraw without waiting for an attack. Thus it was till well into the third night, when word came that the supply trains had caught up and that rations could be had. These were issued as soon as possible, although the operation was a slow one in the dark, and at the first blush of dawn, in a heavy rain and snow storm of the fourth day, I ordered Hatch again to the front. But as fate would have it, both Rutherford Creek and Duck River were already out of their banks, the bottoms were flooded and there was nothing the best officer could do but to call a halt. This had already been authorized by Thomas because of the wintry weather and the high water, but it now became an absolute necessity. Hatch was, however, an energetic and enterprising leader, anxious to get forward and again at work on the enemy's rear guard. Under my personal supervision, he pushed a few dismounted men over the ruins of the railroad bridge, but it re-

quired several hours to gather sufficient materials by tearing down the neighboring barns and outhouses to floor over the track and make it passable for men and horses. It took the better part of two days for the staff engineer to make a raft bridge of similar materials with sufficient buoyancy to pass our columns to the south side of the river by the turnpike.

Meanwhile, the only pontoon train belonging to that army had been sent on the wrong turnpike by someone whose name was never known. But as it did not get back to the direct road nor overtake my leading division for forty-eight hours the result was that two whole days and nights were lost. With one raging creek and one river out of banks to bridge and cross, it was now certain that Hood would gain sufficient time to save the wreck of his army and get well on toward Alabama before we could possibly get strung out again in orderly pursuit.

Much has been said, first and last, in condemnation of Thomas for letting this pontoon train go astray, and it was certainly a grievous mistake, whoever made it, but it may well be doubted, even if we could have laid the bridges one after the other and got across the two streams, whether we would have been in time to bring Hood to bay or to interfere materially with his safe retreat from Columbia to the Tennessee River. It is easy to criticise, but I am sure that neither critic nor troops, no matter who they might be, could have better withstood the exposure and hardship of the campaign, captured more guns and prisoners, or inflicted greater injury upon the retreating enemy than did

the cavalry corps between Nashville and Columbia in the midwinter of 1864. It was the only pursuit of the kind on either side of the entire war.

While the greater part of the cavalry were waiting, as they were forced to do, for the detachments to bridge creeks and rivers, the Fourth Corps caught up with us at Rutherford Creek, and I shall never forget the enthusiastic greeting that its gallant officers and men shouted at us as we were passing again to the front. Both General Wood, himself an old cavalryman, and his officers declared they had never seen so many cavalry in one body before; they had never known cavalry to be handled as we had handled it; they had never seen cavalry turning the enemy's flanks, rushing his breastworks, capturing his cannon, taking his flags, and gathering in prisoners as we had done at Nashville; and finally, that they had never known cavalry to mount so quickly nor so promptly nor to continue the pursuit so long. Not one of these veteran infantrymen had yet realized the true cavalryman's dream of mounted troops nor seen them as Wood declared "used like a whip around the enemy's flanks and rear" as we had used them for the last four days. Finally, as we were marching to the Duck River bridge, an infantry corps, for the first time in the history of that army, lined both sides of the turnpike, splitting their throats with cheer after cheer for the gallant fellows who had not only shown them how cavalry should fight, but had won the substantial trophies of victory from the infantry, who witnessed and gave such willing praise to their performances.

It was an inspiring scene long to be remembered,

and the only one of the kind I ever witnessed. Indeed, it was the only one of the kind I ever heard of even. It was not only the first but the last like it that ever took place in the West, for after the cavalry got fairly under way south of Columbia, no part of the infantry ever caught up with it again in that theater of operations. As is well known, it acted thenceforth as an independent body, and with a few weeks' rest and reorganization grew, as I shall show, into an invincible mounted army, which played a separate and conclusive part not only in defeating the Confederate cavalry, but did much in destroying the resources of the Confederacy and in bringing the Civil War itself to a glorious conclusion.

On the night of December 18, eight miles north of Columbia, I wrote as follows to Grant's headquarters:

> . . . Our campaign is so far complete, and I know you will rejoice. How is gold? If the right steps are taken, and Dana operates properly from Memphis, Hood ought to be destroyed.
>
> I don't know how many trophies, nor how many prisoners we have, though I can safely say no corps of this army has more of the real evidences of victory than the one I have the honor of commanding. . . .

Having been brought to a standstill, as shown, by conditions beyond human control, I sent Johnson and Knipe back to Nashville on December 20 with orders to gather up and remount their foot brigades as soon as possible, but I relaxed no effort to get Hatch, Croxton and Hammond across the Duck River and strung out again in pursuit of the enemy. It was a strenuous and distressing time for both

men and horses, but with all I could do we lost much time and suffered much hardship in that desolate and difficult region.

The conditions which confronted Hood in his advance, and especially in his efforts to cross the Duck River, were far more favorable than those which beset us in our efforts to cross that stream in pursuit of his defeated army. Winter and its floods were now upon us, and not till the fourth morning were we again fairly in motion. Hood, having crossed the river and destroyed his bridges on the 19th, hurried his shattered divisions and impedimenta as rapidly as possible toward the Tennessee at Bainbridge, about seventy-five miles away. While resting south of the river at Columbia, he organized a stronger rear guard, composed of eight picked infantry brigades, each about five hundred strong, under Walthall, "one of the ablest division commanders of the Confederacy," and, leaving him and Forrest to bring up the rear, he pushed on with more confidence and much better order to the river, which he reached and crossed on Christmas day.[1]

While Hood's rear guard under these able lieutenants had a macadamized road from Columbia to Pulaski, and the worst sort of dirt roads through a thinly settled and barren country from Pulaski to the Tennessee River, it had secured a sufficient lead to select and occupy the most favorable positions, one after the other, for delivering battle and compelling us to develop front whenever they thought their interests required it. Forrest's principal object, after gathering up stragglers, was obviously to gain sufficient time for Hood's main body

[1] Hood's "Advance and Retreat," pp. 243 *et seq.*

to cross the river before we could fall upon and capture such part of it as we might still find on our side. This I fully understood and, with five brigades well in hand, lost not an hour night or day that could possibly be avoided. But with rain and frost to chill and distress both horses and men, and the country getting wilder and more desolate as we pushed into it, we could not get forward fast enough on the flanks of the enemy's rear guard to seriously engage it, till we came to a more favorable stretch of country in the neighborhood of Lynnville. Here we succeeded in spreading out somewhat and in closing upon and driving the stubborn and still unshaken Southerners beyond Richland Creek.

In that spirited affair which took place toward night, Hatch on the main road and Croxton at last on the flank routed Buford's cavalry and drove it from the field in confusion, capturing Buford's battle flag, wounding him through the leg, and taking many of his escort and fighting force, prisoners of war. The leaders in the mêlée, Croxton on our side and Buford on the Confederate side, were Kentuckians from the Blue Grass region. They were both descended from men of the strong hand and were soldiers of gallantry and experience who had tackled each other many times before. With bugles blowing and guidons fluttering in the wind, they rushed bravely at each other and with their followers became engaged in a hand to hand fight which lasted till darkness closed the scene in Croxton's favor.

Owing to the dash and skill of Tom Harrison's brigade (Sixth Division), the Richland Creek bridges were saved, and this enabled the entire command to continue the pursuit without delay, but

the advance was necessarily compelled to move in weak order. Just at night it came up with the enemy, occupying a strong fence-rail layout at the head of a heavily wooded ravine through which the road passed. While Harrison was deploying to attack, he paused for Hammond, Croxton, and Hatch to pass around the enemy's position. But at this juncture, as if to show that they still had fight left in them, the enemy sallied from their layout, broke through and drove back Harrison's attenuated line, and before the brigade behind could gather itself for an effective defense or counter attack, captured, cut out, and got away with one gun of Smith's battery, I, Fourth United States Artillery. This was a gallant but expiring effort. In those days it was customary for the horse batteries to keep close up with the advanced guard, so as to open promptly with canister and shrapnel as soon as it got within range of the enemy. Smith and his lieutenants, especially Rodney of the old Delaware family of that name, were particularly active and aggressive and no reflection rested upon them for the loss of the only gun ever taken from the cavalry corps. The incident was a surprise, due entirely to the roughness of the ground, the narrow ravine in which the battery was caught, and the dense forest in front, but the spirited sally was promptly repulsed by the coöperating troopers whose dismounted line overlapped, turned, and enveloped the rail layout, and forced the rebel rear guard again to withdraw.

At this stage of the game nothing could resist our onset. The enemy apparently realized that, and again took up his line of retreat under the cover of darkness through the wild and heavily wooded coun-

try stretching onward to the Tennessee River. Dash after dash was made for the lost gun, but Forrest gave his personal attention to hurrying it to the rear, and it was not finally recaptured till a few months later in the campaign against Selma.

Darkness again put an end to the pursuit, but it was continued the next day to Sugar Creek, a clear, beautiful stream of limpid water running through an unbroken forest to the river. All efforts to bring the enemy again to anything more than a skirmish were futile. The road was lined with abandoned wagons and broken down mules, giving conclusive evidence that the fighting of that campaign was at an end. Beyond the creek Forrest formed line and made a brief show of resistance, but a flank movement by Hammond's brigade easily turned him out of his position and sent him again to the rear under the cover of darkness.

The country in which we now found ourselves was the worst we had yet seen. It was entirely stripped of forage and supplies. Our own trains were far to the rear, our haversacks and forage bags were empty. There was absolutely nothing at hand except the beautiful, clear spring water of Sugar Creek, but neither men nor horses could live on water alone. As I well knew, the enemy had had ample time to reach his floating bridge at the foot of Mussel Shoals, but that night it became certain from the report of the country people that their main body had not only reached it, but got safely to the other side on Christmas day. My only hope, therefore, was to catch Forrest's cavalry and his eight brigades of infantry before they could cross the river. I therefore halted the corps and at once

selected five hundred of the best mounted men from those regiments which had done the least work and, placing the whole under the command of Colonel Spalding, who had shown such untiring activity and enterprise, ordered him to push forward by the shortest possible route without pausing for any obstacle he could overcome or pass around till he reached the Tennessee River. All day of the 27th and most of that night he crowded his troopers to the utmost of their strength and endurance but without any other result than picking up a few tired stragglers and seeing on either hand increasing evidences of the ruin of the army which had confronted us on the morning of the 15th, but only to find that the last of the enemy's organizations had crossed the river and destroyed the bridge during the night.

Foreseeing that this must be the inevitable result, I had taken the precaution several days before of suggesting to Thomas that the light iron-clad gunboats of Admiral Lee's fleet should push their way up the river through Mussel Shoals for the purpose of destroying the bridge, as well as such boats as might be found, before the enemy could cross. It is now known that this operation was entirely feasible, but Admiral Lee let it slip by unimproved. Although he got within one mile of the bridge in ample time, he did not reach it because, as he afterward told me, he had no pilot he could trust. This was indubitably our last and best chance, but the independence of the navy and the natural timidity of a deep-water sailor in a shoal-water river defeated it.

The Nashville campaign was at an end. It had lasted nearly six weeks through untold hardship

of advance, battle, and retreat. Men and horses had suffered all the rigors of winter, snow, rain, frost, mud, and exposure. During the nights, the temperature would fall so as to make ice from half an inch to an inch thick, and this was far too thin to carry horses without breaking through. As a consequence, the roads were worked up into a continuous quagmire. The horses' legs were covered with mud, and this, in turn, was frozen, so that great numbers of the poor animals were entirely disabled, their hoofs softened and the hair of their legs so rubbed off that it was impossible for them to travel. Hundreds lost their hoofs entirely, and in all my experience I have never seen so much suffering. My own horse, the "Waif," with all his pluck, was disabled and I had to send him from the Tennessee to the depot hospital at Nashville for treatment. It was six weeks before he was returned fit for service. Of course, it was impossible to suspend operations as long as there was the least chance of bringing the enemy to bay. It was absolutely necessary to continue the pursuit while we had horses enough left to carry the organization forward. During the fortnight from Nashville to the Tennessee, over five thousand horses were so disabled and so worn down by fatigue, exposure, and starvation that such of them as it was not merciful to kill had to be gathered up and sent back for treatment. Fortunately, a respite was now at hand, during which the work of repair and restoration was to go on till the cavalry corps reached the condition of efficiency which had not hitherto been possible.

It will be remembered that throughout this campaign McCook with two brigades, about three thou-

sand sabers, was absent. He had been detached on the eve of battle by direction of Thomas to southwestern Kentucky in chase of Lyon, a West Point acquaintance of mine who had broken into that region with a small brigade of seven or eight hundred men and was threatening our communications in the direction of Bowling Green.

I should have delayed that detachment till after Hood's defeat, but my duty was to obey orders. Lyon was known as an "illusive cuss" whose force, composed mostly of guerrillas, usually did more running than fighting. Of course, McCook, with his much heavier column, failed to overtake him. But during the pursuit, in which his men suffered great hardships, he passed at first through a region in which he picked up many horses and had some fun. Finding himself one night at Trenton, a small town near the state line between Tennessee and Kentucky, he went into camp at the plantation of Colonel Sebree, a loyalist and gentleman of boundless hospitality, with whom I was for many years afterward associated in a coal-mining enterprise at Earlington, Kentucky.

Of course, McCook and his leading officers were invited to make their headquarters in the Colonel's mansion, and as they had been paid off a few days before they had an abundance of greenbacks. After dinner the Colonel according to the custom of the country invited them to a game of cards as the only entertainment he could offer them. Of course, the stakes were heavy and, as the host lived in a region where poker is not regarded as a game of chance, the luck was with him. He, at least, had nothing to complain of, but in the midst of the

game his colored overseer softly entered the room and whispered: "Colonel, them Yankee soldiers outside are burning your fence-rails." The Colonel dismissed him with a deprecatory wave of the hand and gave increased attention to the game. Shortly afterward, the overseer burst into the room and called out this time so all could hear him: "Colonel, if you don't come out here and stop it, them Yankee soldiers will burn the very last one of yo' fence-rails!" Even this did not move the imperturbable Kentuckian, for the game was still going his way, but raising his voice without taking his eyes from the table, he called out: "Go away from here, you black rascal; don't you see I'm making fence rails a heap faster than those soldiers can burn them?"

McCook's eccentric march carried him far away, both from the battle and from Hood's line of retreat. He was gone seventeen days, marched more than four hundred miles over the worst roads in the country, hundreds of his men got frosted hands and feet in the storm that delayed the attack on Hood, and all suffered untold hardships, without the consolation of having done the Confederate cause the slightest injury.

It is well known that Hood's army was practically destroyed by this campaign. It was reduced to less than fifteen thousand infantry,[1] without guns, trains, or munitions. If I had had the use and help of McCook's division it is doubtful whether any of the enemy would have been left to tell the tale. It is also well known that all prisoners taken primarily passed through the hands of the cavalry or were

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 780, Beauregard to Davis.

picked up by the infantry because their escape had been cut off by the cavalry. My provost marshal's report shows that the cavalry actually captured thirty-two field guns, eleven caissons, three thousand two hundred and thirty-two prisoners, one general officer, twelve colors or battle flags, besides nearly all Hood's wagons and mules. It should be noted that these figures do not include the sick and wounded taken at Franklin, but the report also shows that, after the operations of the main cavalry column had come to an end, detachments from the Sixth and Seventh Divisions went with General Steedman's column south of the Tennessee, where they burned the rebel pontoon train of eighty boats and one hundred and twenty-five wagons, and captured a large number of horses and mules.

Our losses in these operations were one field gun, recaptured the next spring, one hundred and twenty-two officers and men killed, five hundred and twenty-one wounded and two hundred and fifty-nine missing.

During the campaign it was my pleasant duty to congratulate my command in field orders "for their success, good conduct, and the dashing gallantry displayed in the engagement near Nashville." A few days later I had the privilege of adding to my own congratulations the thanks of General Thomas "for the vigor, skill, bravery, and endurance displayed," by the officers and men of the cavalry corps "in their long and toilsome pursuit of the retreating rebel army." While Thomas never wasted compliments nor extended thanks where they were not fairly and fully earned, this served to make his praise all the more acceptable. But in order that individual merit

should not be swallowed up in the wholesale commendation of the corps, I published a general order from my headquarters, at Gravelly Springs, Alabama, on February 24, 1865, commending the gallant and meritorious conduct of many officers and men, giving their names and specifying their individual services. Among them will be found those of Spalding, Harrison, Gresham, Boyer, Davis, Norman Smith, Mitchell, Mead, Hedges, and many other commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates.[1] The list was long, but might well have been doubled, for no army corps ever had better officers or more gallant soldiers. As far as I know there was not one in all the number who straggled, skulked, or voluntarily remained in the rear. All put forth their best efforts to get to the front, and the only cry from those behind was: "Hurry up, boys, or it will all be over before you get there!" And that martial spirit lasted till the last gun was fired, the last prisoner taken, and the last man mustered out of service!

In this entire campaign I have not hesitated to give the principal credit to the cavalry, not only for the overwhelming victory at Nashville, but for all the injury inflicted on the enemy during the retreat into Alabama. I have not hesitated to claim that every attack made by the infantry, except possibly those of McArthur, from the morning of the first day till toward the close of the second day, when I personally pointed out to Thomas and Scho-

[1] For the Official Reports of these operations from the date of the Corps' Organization, Oct. 24, 1864, to Feb. 1, 1865, and for the list of those who had especially distinguished themselves, see Official Records, Serial No. 93, pp. 550 *et seq.*

field my men entering the left and rear of the enemy's works and my guns enfilading and overshooting his entrenchments, was either too long delayed or primarily a failure.

I have not hesitated to say that but for the success of the cavalry's turning movement on both days, Hood would have been able to maintain his position in front of Nashville indefinitely so far as the infantry was concerned. Withal, of course, I cheerfully concede that without the presence of the infantry on the field to take advantage of the initial demoralizing breaks, on both days, in the enemy's lines, which they promptly and nobly did, the successes of the cavalry would doubtless have been quickly arrested and brought to naught. It is also quite true that by far the heaviest fighting and the greatest losses fell, as usual, to the lot of the infantry.

That Schofield's corps met no serious resistance and did no real fighting at Nashville or afterwards is shown beyond doubt or dispute by the fact that its killed in both days' battle was "only nine men."

But if there were any doubt on this point, it would be set at rest by Schofield's own generous admissions. In his official report, referring to the operations on the second day, he says:

> The hill was, however, carried by General Wilson's cavalry (dismounted), whose gallantry and energy on that and other occasions, which came under my observation, cannot be too highly praised. . . . My order was not executed with the promptness or energy which I expected. . . . The cavalry had cut off his line of retreat by the Granny White pike.[1]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, p. 346.

That my statements and inferences are fully justified is further shown by the facts as recounted by Thomas and VanHorne, as well as by the statements contained in the various official reports.

Moreover, Thomas, in recommending me on December 25 for promotion to the full rank of major general for what he was pleased to term "the excellent management of his [my] corps during the present campaign," did not hesitate to say of the cavalry: "It has peculiarly distinguished itself, attempting such things as are not expected of cavalry, such as assaulting the enemy in intrenched positions, and always with success, capturing his works with many guns and prisoners. His corps has always been conspicuous for its energy in the pursuit of the retreating rebel army, which has cost the rebel commander many men, several pieces of artillery, and tended much to the demoralization of his army." He also specially recommended the dashing commander of my Fifth Division, Brigadier General Edward Hatch, to be full major general, quoting with approval my prior recommendation and giving my command full credit for enveloping and driving back the enemy's lines on the flank and rear into the fortifications on the Brentwood Hills and then by a bold charge carrying the works.[1]

The infantry on my immediate left and next to my troops, when they first enveloped and broke through the rebel lines, belonged to Smith's corps. Next to his left was the Fourth Corps, under the able command of General T. J. Wood. Wood's final assault on the enemy in his front was a

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 343, 344. See also, p. 210; also, Serial No. 93, pp. 38-39.

desperate and bloody, but successful, affair, for which Wood and his brave soldiers are entitled to the highest credit. It is right, however, to say that it followed in point of time the assault of my troops on the enemy's extreme left. Nor can too much praise be given to the gallant soldiers of Smith's corps, who vied with my men and whose skirmishers entered the forts with them. Here again, it is perfectly right to claim that the cavalry were in the lead and showed the way. This is not at all disputed either by General Smith or his subordinates. The General himself officially says: "The cavalry claimed the guns as their capture, and more for their gallant charge than because they were entitled to the pieces, they were conceded to them." McArthur, one of his division commanders, reports: "Simultaneously with their advance, the cavalry of General Hatch's division charged, and from their advantageous position entered the works with my skirmishers and claimed the guns as their capture, which I conceded to them, their gallantry on that occasion being conspicuous, although the fort had been rendered untenable by the fire from my batteries." In this last remark, however, he is not correct, and is not supported by the report of Colonel William L. McMillen, commanding his First Brigade, who admits my guns were in position, engaging the fort when he arrived on the field: "A battery far to our right, belonging, I think, to some cavalry command, was engaging these guns when we came up." He, somewhat grudgingly, concedes: "The cavalry regiments on my right deserve credit for the dashing part they took in assaulting and carrying these works."[1]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, pp. 434, 438, 441.

Hood in his report says:

. . . Nothing of any importance occurred until the morning of the 15th of December when the enemy . . . attacked simultaneously both our flanks. On our right he was handsomely repulsed, with heavy loss, but on our left, toward evening, he carried some partially completed redoubts of those before mentioned.

During the night of the 15th our whole line was shortened and strengthened, our left was also thrown back, and dispositions were made to meet any renewed attack. The corps of Major General Cheatham was transferred from our right to our left. . . .

Early on 16th . . . the enemy made a general attack on our lines accompanied by a heavy fire of artillery. All his assaults were repulsed with heavy loss till 3:30 P. M., when a portion of our line to the left of the center . . . gave way . . . the position gained by the enemy [clearly Hatch and Hammond] being such as to enfilade and cause in a few moments our entire line to give way and retreat rapidly down the pike . . . in great confusion. . . . Our loss in artillery was heavy—fifty-four guns.[1]

He adds:

During this day's march (17th) the enemy's cavalry pressed with great boldness and activity, charging our infantry repeatedly with the saber, and at times penetrating our lines.

Lieutenant General S. D. Lee says in his official report.

. . . About 9 A. M. on the 16th the enemy . . . opened a terrible artillery fire on my line, principally on the Franklin pike, . . . lasting about two hours, when his infantry moved to the assault . . . in several lines of battle, but the assault was easily repulsed. It was re-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, pp. 654-5; also Serial No. 94, pp. 699-768.

newed, however, several times with spirit, but only to meet each time with a like result. . . . Their last assault was made about 3:30 P. M., when they were driven back in great disorder, . . . but suddenly all eyes were turned to the center of our line near the Granny White pike, where it was evident the enemy had made an entrance and our men were flying to the rear in the wildest confusion. . . .

Although from this out the report is somewhat confused, he adds:

The enemy soon gained our rear, and was moving on my left flank, when my line gradually gave way. . . . The only pursuit made at that time was by a small force coming from the Granny White pike. . . . When Brentwood was passed the enemy was only a half mile from the Franklin pike, where Chalmers was fighting them. . . .

Early on the morning of the 17th our cavalry was driven in confusion by the enemy, who at once commenced a vigorous pursuit, his cavalry charging at every opportunity and in the most daring manner. It was apparent that they were determined to make the retreat a rout if possible. . . .[1]

Major General Stevenson says:

. . . Toward evening General Lee sent me information that things were going badly on the left, and that it might be necessary to retire under cover of approaching night. . . .[2]

Lieutenant General A. P. Stewart describes the battles as having begun "on the left, and resulted in the capture of redoubts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5," when he notified the commanding general, who sent reenforcements, and finally ordered Cheatham's whole corps from the extreme right to the extreme left.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 98, pp. 686 *et seq.*

[2] *Ib.*, p. 695.

He adds that "as the object of the enemy seemed to be to turn our left flank," the first reënforcements were put in on the left, "parallel to the Hillsboro pike," . . . and were in turn reënforced by later arrivals. . . . "By this time the other brigades of Johnston's division had come up, but they were unable to check the progress of the enemy, who had passed the Hillsboro pike fully a half mile, completely turning our flank and gaining the rear of both Walthall and Loring, whose situation was becoming perilous in the extreme." . . . The next day, the 16th, a reserve brigade . . . was finally sent "to the hills in our rear, . . . east of the Granny White pike" to drive back the enemy who had "passed our left, crossed to the east side of the pike and held this portion of the ridge." He adds: "The situation then was briefly this: The left flank completely turned, the enemy crossing to the east side of the Granny White pike in our rear, and holding the ridge on that side. . . . It seemed as though in case of disaster, escape was impossible. . . . About two or three o'clock in the afternoon, while in conversation with Hood, an officer of his staff announced that the line had given way."[1]

No regular report from General Cheatham can be found, but General Bate, commanding one of his divisions, after describing the various operations which ended in turning and driving back the left of the Confederate line on the 15th, takes up the operations of the 16th, describes how he moved from the Granny White pike, how he called for reenforcements without getting them, how the extreme

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, pp. 712 *et seq.*

left of the Confederate line of battle "was driven back down the hill into the field in his rear, and the balls of the enemy were fired *into the backs*" of his men, and how "the brigade on the left of our line of battle gave way and the enemy took his place on the hills in my rear." About 4 P. M. the same general, seeing "the enemy assault and carry the line near the angle," was ordered to form line on the opposite side of Granny White pike, but found on getting there that that part of the Confederate line "had also given way and the enemy was already commanding it with his small arms. The men then one by one climbed over the rugged hills in our rear and passed down a short valley which debouched into the Franklin turnpike."[1]

General Chalmers, commanding the Confederate cavalry, actually present at the battle of Nashville, is a witness of the highest credibility. He says: . . . "On the morning of the 15th the enemy made a general attack . . . and after forcing Ector's brigade to swing around and join the infantry on its right, thus leaving the Harding pike open, the enemy moved down it and the first intelligence I had of their presence, they were already two miles in my rear on the turnpike." He adds: "I had several times during the day attempted to communicate with General Hood, but my couriers were either killed or captured or failed to reach him."[2]

It is more than likely that the same was true of Hood's efforts to communicate with Chalmers.

"Before daylight of the 16th," says Chalmers,

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, pp. 750 *et seq.*

[2] *Ib.*, pp. 765 *et seq.*

"I had taken position on the [Hillsboro] pike" . . . and was soon engaged in skirmishing with the enemy's cavalry, whose object was to move in a direction "which would have placed them entirely in rear of our army and put them in possession of the road by which it afterwards retreated. . . . About 4:30 P. M. I received an order from General Hood" . . . to hold the Granny White pike at all hazards, and sent Rucker's brigade "to take position in rear of that from which Kelly had been driven. It was attacked at once in front and flank by Hatch and Johnson and after a sharp struggle was forced back in some disorder." . . .[1]

It must be observed that, while the Confederate reports are more or less confused and difficult to follow, they all concur in saying that the attack which turned their infantry and cavalry came from their left across the Hillsboro and Granny White pikes, and as my cavalry were the only troops that ever made claim to having followed that line on the second day, the conclusion is inevitable that to them and them alone is due the credit of having turned that flank, taken it in reverse, and sent Hood's entire army in confusion down the road to Franklin, Columbia, and the Tennessee River. This conclusion is made certain by the fact that all Confederate accounts concur in declaring that every infantry attack failed till the last one, and as that was made only after Thomas saw my cavalry entering the left and rear of the Confederate works, there can be no doubt as to the actual cause of the Confederate overthrow.

As none of the leading Confederate generals

[1] O. R. Serial No. 93, p. 765 *et seq.*

were personally present at the spot where the break actually took place, it is not strange that none of them undertakes to say just at what place or at what minute it occurred.

No vindication of the foresight and firmness of General Thomas in his resolute stand for an adequate cavalry force could possibly be more complete than that furnished by the results of the battle and pursuit. If anything is, however, needed to make it more convincing, it will be found in the most interesting testimony of General Forrest himself. Under the date January 2, 1865, writing to his new commander, General Richard Taylor, successor to the unfortunate Hood, Forrest said:

> My command is greatly reduced in numbers and efficiency by losses in battle and in the worn down and unserviceable condition of the animals. The Army of the Tennessee was badly defeated and is greatly demoralized, and to save it during the retreat from Nashville I was compelled almost to sacrifice my command. Aside from the killed, wounded, and captured of my command, many were sent to the rear with barefooted, lame and unserviceable horses, who have taken advantage of all the confusion and disorder attending the hasty retreat of a beaten army, and are now scattered through the country or gone to their homes. The enemy have about ten thousand cavalry, finely equipped and recently mounted on the best of horses, and I ask that you will send McCullough's brigade to me at once, with any other cavalry you can possibly spare.[1]

To this, General Chalmers, one of Forrest's most capable division commanders, in an unofficial letter to him, dated at Rienzi, Mississippi, January 3, 1865, adds:

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 756.

To learn wisdom from your enemy is one of the wisest maxims of history. At Nashville our enemy had a large force of cavalry, but, instead of wasting its strength in the front, he kept it quietly in the rear of his infantry, resting and recruiting, until the time for action came and then moved it out fresh and vigorous with telling effect. . . . If we had time to organize, recruit, and fit up the command in a place where forage could be procured, we can whip the enemy's cavalry, and every man in your command is anxious that you should have a fair trial of strength with Major General Wilson. You will pardon me for the plainness of this letter, but there are times when every man should think, and should not hesitate to express his thoughts.[1]

Alas for Hood! He passed out broken-hearted at last by the weight of his misfortunes. His courage and his undoubted ability as a leader and a general deserved better luck. But it was his sad fate to dash his veteran army to pieces against far better leadership backed by the still greater infallibility of numbers. The larger remnant of his shattered army, two corps at least in name, was hurried off to confront their debonair old antagonist, Sherman, in Georgia. A third corps, with what was left of Forrest and his cavalry, were turned over to General Taylor, the gallant son of "Old Rough and Ready," to become the backbone of whatever further resistance might be found possible to the impending onward march of Thomas's victorious army. It was this rested, reorganized heroic remnant, under Taylor and Forrest, which, with undaunted pluck, confronted a little later the rested and fully organized Cavalry Corps of the Military Division of the Mississippi.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, p. 759.

After some days of hesitation and delay on Grant's part, he finally consented to Thomas's well deserved promotion to be major general in the regular army. He was, however, apparently still disposed to be exacting as to the troops and refused his consent to winter quarters and greatly needed rest, both of which were imperative for Thomas's army, but instead marked out for them an almost impossible further winter campaign in pursuit of Hood. Thomas did not hesitate to declare it impracticable and had his way, but was punished by seeing his invincible army broken up and scattered, thereby reducing him to a comparatively unimportant rôle for the remainder of the war. I do not know on what authority David Homer Bates makes the statement that President Johnson offered, in 1868, after Grant's election to the presidency, to make Thomas lieutenant general over Sherman and Sheridan. No doubt the offer was really made and it was like this patient, high-minded man to refuse. His telegram refusing on grounds most creditable to him is quoted. Who could have blamed him if he had accepted? It is safe to say that neither of his great rivals would, under like circumstances, have declined.[1]

As for my own promotion to be major general, thanks, probably, to Stanton's good memory for what he may have considered my impudence, it was hung up in the balances for me to earn a second time in a later, larger, and final campaign, in which it was the good fortune of the troops under my command to meet Dick Taylor and my old antagonists, Forrest and Chalmers, on their chosen fields

[1] "Lincoln in the Telegraph Office," p. 321.

and behind the strong fortifications into which they were driven for refuge. It was still reserved for my incomparable troopers to repeat again at Montevallo, Ebenezer Church, Selma, West Point, and Columbus their successes at Nashville—to ride down the redoubtable Forrest, to scale again still more formidable fortifications, to destroy the last strongholds and resources of the Confederacy, to deal the final crushing blow and to end forever its last hopes of further resistance in dreaded and threatened guerrilla warfare by the capture of its fleeing President.

I cannot close this chapter without emphasizing the important lesson it teaches, that the extraordinary success which fell to the lot of the cavalry in the Nashville campaign, as well as in that of the following spring through Alabama and Georgia, while largely due to the excellent character and discipline of both officers and men, was still more largely due to their concentration into a single corps, to their close coöperation in mass with the infantry at Nashville, and to their mutual and unselfish support of each other in every stage of the campaign from the Tennessee River till the end of the war. Finally, the following chapters will show that the only correct principle for the use of cavalry was stated in my letter of October 26, 1864, from Gaylesville to Rawlins, Grant's chief-of-staff:

> . . . Cavalry is useless for defence; its only power is in a vigorous offensive. Therefore I urge its concentration south of the Tennessee and hurling it into the bowels of the south in masses that the enemy cannot drive back as he did Sooy Smith and Sturgis. . . .[1]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 79, pp. 442, 445.

# V

## COLLECTION, ORGANIZATION, AND INSTRUCTION OF THE CAVALRY CORPS

March to Gravelly Springs and Waterloo—Pinhook Town—Construction of cantonments—Long and Upton arrive—Division and brigade commanders—Organization of command—Daily instruction—Review for Thomas—Knipe detached to Canby—The Confederacy is doomed—Flag of truce to Forrest—Ready to move—Amplest latitude of an independent commander.

Having camped on December 28, about two miles west of Sugar Creek in the valley of the Tennessee at a hamlet of two or three log houses, known as Pinhook Town, we remained there till orders came to collect my command at Huntsville, about fifty miles to the eastward. General Wood joined me for conference and his corps closed up within supporting distance, but as the enemy had made good his escape across the Tennessee and the country was impassable for wagons, as well as destitute of everything except fuel and water, it was impossible for either cavalry or infantry to remain in that region. Wood reported that with double teams it took twelve hours to move an army wagon six miles, and this made it necessary for us to separate.

Pinhook was one of the most desolate places in

the South, but the creek valleys and out-of-the-way nooks which the Confederates had not found contained enough corn to keep our horses alive till we left the region. While waiting, the Nashville newspapers overtook us with an account of Sherman's capture of Savannah and its presentation to the President as a Christmas gift. This suggested to one of the staff that we should present "the city of Pinhook with all its dependencies and resources" to Mr. Lincoln as a New Year's gift, and much merriment was had over the tentative messages submitted for my approval. It was a grim and cheerless sort of fun, but there were no holiday dinners, no steaming hot punch, and no revelry for those dreary days. It was a mercy that we found "hog and hominy" enough to keep body and soul together in that land of poor whites with neither turkeys nor chickens, and not enough girls within twenty miles for a country dance. It was mid-winter, cold, cheerless and distressing, and this made camp life almost unbearable. Fortunately, we had but a few days' wait till orders took us to Huntsville, an old planting town on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad about fifty miles east of Pinhook.

The country in that region was well settled and had been flourishing, but, lying in the path of war, it had been stripped of its surplus supplies and completely impoverished. Connected with the outer world by a single line of railroad, which had been frequently broken and was now in specially bad condition, it offered no attractions as a point of concentration, except that it lay on the direct route from Nashville to central Alabama. I reached there late on New Year's day. Fortunately, almost at

once I was directed to concentrate the cavalry corps at Eastport, the foot of Mussel Shoals on the Tennessee about one hundred miles further west.

The next day, January 2, 1865, I wrote to Grant's headquarters, as follows:

. . . Several times before coming here I wrote to General Thomas, urging Eastport as the proper place at which to concentrate the cavalry. In face of the very palpable necessities of the case we were ordered to Huntsville. I arrived here last night, and twenty minutes later orders came to go to Eastport.

. . . As soon as horseshoes arrive from Nashville, say to-morrow, I shall begin the march to Eastport—about one hundred miles distant. My cavalry, including Long's and McCook's divisions, can all be united there by the 15th, but how a campaign of more than three days can be conducted from that point is more than I now know. The roads in this country are not well adapted to hauling supplies by wagons at this season of the year. . . .

To reach my new destination involved a toilsome march through a poor planting country broken only by the old towns of Athens and Florence. At Athens, on the Nashville and Decatur Railroad, we halted twenty-four hours to rest and set horseshoes, and while there I wrote again to Grant's headquarters:

. . . You may not have forgotten the remarks in one of my letters in regard to General Thomas. . . . I am sure I have not overdrawn or overcolored the facts and in continuance of the subject, let me add, there is some dissatisfaction existing in this army with the powers that dispense military rewards, for what is regarded as partiality to the Eastern army. You know there is a sort of jealousy existing between the East and West, and while it is of no vital importance, wise men should not entirely ignore it.

The promotion, therefore, of Thomas in the regular army and of Wood, Cox, and probably some others of the volunteers either in fact or by brevet would be received very gratefully.

I have heard men high in rank speak most unkindly of General Grant in this connection. Feeling as I do, I cannot forbear suggesting to you the propriety of not allowing to pass an opportunity for doing the service and the General a kindness. I have never looked into the relative number of promotions made East and West, nor considered the merits of those already made, but it is your place to investigate the justice of the complaint I have mentioned.

. . . I am almost afraid to write fully because . . . my motives may be misconstrued. A man of my make-up likes to know that his views are approved or disapproved upon their separate merits, not upon personal grounds. I frequently differ with the policy of my superiors, say so squarely and unhesitatingly, and then set about performing my part with all the zeal of which I am capable.

. . . You will be sorry to know that the "Waif" is sorely afflicted with boils and skinned legs. I send him to Nashville to-morrow for medical treatment and rest. My stud is more of an infirmary for broken-down cavalry horses than when I used to be on the General's staff. I am nearly a-foot once more.

What is the truth in regard to the Wilmington expedition? From the childish tone of Admiral Porter's published report, I am afraid the expedition is so far a failure. Was Butler actually in command of the land forces?

Remember me kindly to Rawlins and "all," and tell him I saw his man Johnson a day or two ago. He has reenlisted in the Second Iowa Cavalry, and wishes to be remembered to him. Is Rawlins' health really established? A friend of his who had seen him lately says not. I had received the impression that he had entirely recovered.

Passing through Florence several days later, I tarried there a few hours while the column passed on to Gravelly Springs, twenty miles further west. I selected that place as the center of my cantonments, because it was near the head of steamboat navigation at all stages of the river, and I felt sure we could get supplies of every sort from the depots on and beyond the Ohio. The region is high and salubrious, the creek and river valleys abounded in plantations, suitable for drill grounds, while the wooded ridges of sandy and gravelly soil afforded excellent camp sites with plenty of timber and many beautiful springs and running streams. Indeed, it was an ideal region for the work we had in hand.

I established headquarters at the house of Miss Houston, a sister of Governor Houston of Alabama. The family was an old and distinguished one, naturally inclined to loyalty but its possessions lying in a Southern state had compelled it, like many another, to cast its lot in with the Confederacy. Curiously enough, Mr. Boggs, a first cousin of General Grant, with his wife and a charming young daughter, had taken refuge with their kinswoman in the large and commodious mansion near the springs which gave their name to the place. The family of four were most amiable and were, of course, delighted to give us shelter in exchange for protection. In a few days the word went out that although Northerners we were civilized and humane, in consequence of which the mansion soon became the social as well as the military center for the neighboring planters and their families.

For the first time, the cavalry corps now went into regular cantonments of rapidly constructed

log cabins and lean-to stables, which gave fair protection to the men and horses. Every effort was made to collect the entire corps, to remount the dismounted, to drill, instruct, and discipline both officers and men, as well as to build up, train and break in the horses for the spring campaign. No such systematic work had ever been done with the western cavalry.

Hatch, Croxton, and Hammond had accompanied me to that place and were soon followed by Long, Upton, McCook, Alexander, and Winslow, and in a few weeks I had the entire corps of six divisions assembled there or within reach.

It will be recalled that Kilpatrick with the Third Division had gone with Sherman, while a few detached regiments were serving in east Tennessee and along the river between our encampments and the great depot at Chattanooga. But withal, this was the largest body of cavalry ever collected on the American continent. By the middle of February there were twenty-seven thousand men in camp, fully twenty thousand of which were mounted and ready for any duty that might be required of them. Horses had been gathered up and furnished with liberality, but still many were needed to complete the remount. We could easily have used seven thousand more than we ever had, and they could have been furnished had Halleck and Stanton believed in the policy of doing it.

As before stated, the campaign against Hood both in the advance and retreat, had cost us many horses. It was a winter of marching and fighting in rain, snow, and slush, with constant work and exposure which not only disabled many men, but

thousands of horses, so that the mobility of the corps as well as its strength had been materially impaired. Long's division, it will be recalled, had gone to Louisville for remounts, while Upton, with one brigade in Missouri and one in west Tennessee, was on the rail rather than in the fields. McCook, with LaGrange's and Watkins's brigades, had been detached to drive Lyon and Crossland from Kentucky, so that none joined us in time to take part in the pursuit of the rebel army. One by one, however, they all arrived and took part in the work of instruction, equipment, and reorganization at the cantonments between Gravelly Springs and the steamboat landings at Eastport and Waterloo.

Upton, of the West Point class of May, 1861, was an incomparable soldier, and, although a mere youth, he was a veteran in both artillery and infantry. He had been detailed for service with me as soon as he was sufficiently recovered from the wound received at Winchester. With three years of unbroken success he had become widely known as one of the most accomplished and aggressive soldiers of his time. Naturally anxious to round out his career with the cavalry, he threw himself into the work of instruction and discipline with all the ardor of a military enthusiast. Ambition impelled him never to waste an hour in aimless idleness. His constant thought was about organization, tactics, strategy, and logistics. He knew all that the books could teach about administration and military history, and, withal, was as gallant a soldier as ever drew a sword or mounted a horse.[1] His two bri-

[1] "Life and Letters of Emory Upton," by Prof. Michie, with an introduction by James H. Wilson, Appletons, 1885.

gade commanders were Alexander and Winslow. The first, a citizen appointed from Kentucky in the old army, who had served on Stoneman's staff in the Army of the Potomac and afterwards as chief-of-staff to General Blair of the Seventeenth Army Corps. He had been appointed colonel of the Tenth Missouri Cavalry, but, owing to the regiment's reduction in strength, he could not be mustered into service. In other words, he was a young, handsome, and vigorous supernumerary officer, who had been left behind and therefore joined me at Nashville as chief-of-staff. After I became well acquainted with him he was, at my request, brevetted a brigadier general and assigned to Upton's division. His career is fully described in a memoir which I prepared after his death many years later.[1]

Edward F. Winslow, of the old and distinguished New England family of that name, absolutely without military training till he entered the service as a captain of the Fourth Iowa Cavalry, and still a mere youth, was a veteran of varied experience, fine judgment, and approved courage. He fought on every battlefield from Missouri and Kansas to Mississippi and Tennessee and had shown the highest quality. I met him first in the Vicksburg campaign when only a major of the Fourth Iowa Cavalry. His youthful appearance, delicate complexion, and modest behavior had impressed me favorably, but he had dropped out of my memory or become confused with another officer of higher rank. Although he had commanded a brigade and a division with signal success, he had reached no higher grade than that

[1] "Life of Andrew Jonathan Alexander," by James H. Wilson, privately printed.

of colonel. When Upton first recommended him as a brigadier I was reluctant because of uncertainty as to his identity. But a few days later Upton presented him at headquarters and at a glance I recognized him as the worthy major of his regiment who had already won my commendation, and, of course, I consented at once to his assignment. At my request he was also brevetted a brigadier general so as to give him proper rank. From that time till the end of the war he was one of our most useful and resourceful brigade commanders. As he had had considerable experience in railroad building, he was assigned not only to the permanent command of a brigade, but to work of destruction and reconstruction, whenever occasion offered. His last service was in rebuilding the railroad from Atlanta to Chattanooga, which he did in a few weeks in a masterly manner. After the war he became a distinguished railroad builder and accumulated an ample fortune.

McCook, of the First Division, was a member of the distinguished Ohio family which contributed so many soldiers to the Union cause. He had entered the service with the Fourth Indiana Cavalry and, possessing all the talents of his race, had risen by degrees to the command of a division. He was unusually handsome, strong, and vigorous and, while not specially a student nor learned in the military art, he had had excellent experience and was always prompt and cheerful in such duties as fell to his lot. He was exceedingly fortunate in having two of the best brigade commanders in the Volunteer Army. John T. Croxton of Kentucky, already frequently mentioned in this narrative, com-

manded his first brigade of mounted infantry. He was tall, handsome, dark-eyed, of straight English descent, from the Blue Grass region. He graduated at Yale a few years before the outbreak of the Civil War, and, having grown up with slavery and its abuses, like Lincoln, Palmer, Oglesby, Cullom, Fry, Clay, Harlan, Bristow, the Goodloes, and many other notable Kentuckians, had imbibed a bitter hatred of that institution as well as an ardent love for the Union. As a boy he had sent money to buy Sharp's rifles for the free-state men in Kansas and when the Civil War broke out he was one of the first to enlist in Cary B. Fry's regiment of Kentucky Infantry, of which he finally became colonel. He participated in all the battles of the Army of the Cumberland and distinguished himself for coolness and courage in action. At the battle of Chickamauga he won special mention for intrepidity. A staff officer had reported to Thomas that a certain piece of woods to the front was full of disorganized rebels waiting to be brought in, whereupon the grave and dignified general, turning to Croxton, directed him to go out and bring them in. Croxton started at once, but had hardly entered the woods in front when he woke up one of the fiercest fights of the day. Without stopping to count the rebels waiting to be brought in, he found a full division moving to the attack. Of course, he put up the best fight he could but was quickly overborne and driven back to rally behind the works from which he had advanced. As soon as he reformed Croxton rode to Thomas and saluting him, gravely remarked: "General I would have brought them in if I had known which ones you wanted!"

This grim humor touched Thomas deeply and made him always the firm friend of Croxton. Shortly afterward this brigade was mounted and added to the cavalry corps, with which it served efficiently till the end of the war. Croxton was an officer of rare discretion, coolness, and courage, always ready for any duty that might be assigned him.

O. H. LaGrange commanded McCook's second brigade. He entered the army as a captain and had reached the colonelcy of the First Wisconsin Cavalry before he was thirty. Tall, powerful, and active, he had risen through hard knocks and experience to command a brigade. He looked like a berserker and was full of enterprise and daring. His fixed rule was to let no man get deeper into the battle than himself. Withal, he was a cool, watchful, and cautious officer, who exacted implicit obedience but never exacted a service in which he was not willing to lead. Without being a martinet, he was one of the best all-round soldiers I ever met and had the war lasted he must have risen to much higher rank and more important command.

Eli Long was a Kentuckian, appointed from civil life. He commanded the Second Division, composed of one cavalry and one mounted infantry brigade. He was serious, deliberate, methodical, "still as the breeze, but dreadful as the storm." He entered the regular army two years before the war broke out, but never showed the slightest doubt as to his loyalty or as to his duty. Like many other Kentuckians, he was a born soldier. As modest and noiseless as a woman but as intrepid as one of Cromwell's "Ironsides," he was never absent from duty except when suffering from wounds of which he man-

aged to pick up his full share. Impassible and serene under all conditions, he was without a trace of the fanfaronade and fondness for dress and display which are supposed to be the characteristics of the cavalryman. Looking out constantly for the comfort of his men and horses, he needed no supervision and but few orders. He was always in his right place and always ready for such service as might come his way. Having long served in the division, he naturally succeeded Kenner Garrard in commanding it, took it to Louisville, remounted and refitted it, and then brought it by easy marches to the camp, where it speedily became known as the strongest and best mounted division of the corps.

Strong and trustworthy as Long was himself, he was extremely fortunate in his brigadiers, the first of whom was R. H. G. Minty, the son of a British officer but of Irish blood. He was an educated soldier of great intelligence and enterprise. He entered the service as a captain, rose to the colonelcy of the Fourth Michigan Cavalry, and then, by seniority, to the command of a brigade. He had served creditably through all the campaigns in Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama and had gained the esteem of all who had served with him. Long before the close of the war his regiment had justly come to be regarded as one of the very best in the army. Young, natty, fair-haired, and debonair, Minty was a dandy cavalryman, of many hard knocks and not a few vicissitudes. As a man of military instincts and professional aptitudes, he naturally had his own ideas, and it was not strange that they did not always receive the approval of his less enterprising and less experienced superiors.

At all events, they gave him the reputation of being headstrong and bumptious but from the time he fell under my command till the end of the war, he was in every respect a modest and obedient officer, an excellent disciplinarian, and as good a leader as Murat himself. He needed but the continuous chances of war to become famous as the best Irish soldier of his day.

A. O. Miller, commanding Long's mounted infantry brigade, originally Wilder's, was a doctor by profession but a soldier by instinct and preference. He entered the army from Indiana and rose by arduous service to the colonelcy of his regiment and to the command of the mounted infantry brigade of which it formed a notable part. Steady as a clock and as intrepid as the best grenadier of them all, Miller was equal to any undertaking that might fall to his lot. Quiet, unassuming, and unobtrusive, he might well have been taken, in plain clothes, for a country doctor on his rounds, but he was a big, solid, sound, and successful soldier, without a superior in either the cavalry or infantry. With no bluster and no thoughtless promises, he did his daily work with persistence and patience which made him invincible. He was at that time in middle life, but far above middle merit as an officer. His brigade, armed with Spencer magazine rifles, was a model of efficiency. Whether mounted or on foot as skirmishers, it was invincible. To my certain knowledge, it never made a charge in which it was not completely successful, and it fully sustains the dictum that the best cavalry is the best infantry, mounted.

Edward Hatch of Iowa commanded our Fifth Division. He was a lumberman who perhaps had

never seen a company of uniformed soldiers till he entered the army as a volunteer. Rising rapidly through all the grades, he won his brigadier's stars before he fell under my control. He was a young man, still in his lower thirties, of splendid constitution and striking figure. It was his good fortune and mine that he came to our assistance against Hood in middle Tennessee with a well mounted and well seasoned division, and to him more than to anyone else was due the early and exact knowledge which we obtained of Hood's movements from the time he left the Tennessee till he sat down in front of Nashville. Hatch more than anyone else should have credit for the active and aggressive advance of the cavalry against Hood's left in front of Nashville. It was under his dashing leadership that Ector's brigade was broken and driven back and that Chalmers's headquarters and ammunition trains were captured. It was largely to him that the principal success of both the first and second days in front of Nashville was due. He was brave, energetic, and aggressive, and needed only to be told what he was to do and then attended to the rest himself. He had only one fault. He was so ardent and active on the fighting line and in pursuit, that he always said "yes" to every suggestion and always declared himself ready without reference to food, forage, or ammunition. He always took the chances of getting them from the enemy or from the general trains and seemed to fear nothing but that he and his command might not do their full share of the work, or get their full share of the glory. It was a supreme pleasure to command such a man and to look out for the comfort and needs of such troops.

Although Hatch was talkative and somewhat given to harmless gasconade, he never committed himself to any enterprise or adventure, however difficult or desperate, which he was not willing to undertake or which he did not throw himself and his command into with absolute fearlessness. Shortly after reaching our cantonments on the Tennessee, he fell sick, doubtless from exposure and over-exertion, whereupon I ordered him on twenty days' leave of absence, suggesting that if well enough he might visit Sheridan in the Valley of Virginia and see how the cavalry of that incomparable leader was organized and handled. He seized the opportunity with avidity and made the visit before he was fully well. Shortly after his return, he was giving an account of his observations, concluding with the remark that he would be willing to die if he could "have the command of Sheridan's cavalry for just one day." One of his staff, bolder and perhaps more impudent than the rest, broke in with the inquiry: "But, General, wouldn't you like to live just another day to brag about it?" The shot was a good one and brought a laugh to the party in which Hatch joined cheerfully with the rest. He was a generous and magnanimous soul who had the love of every officer and man in his command. I desired, therefore, that his division should be remounted, re-armed and re-equipped in the best possible manner. Consequently, I asked him to turn over his horses to the other troops and make a special requisition for their replacement. Unfortunately, however, the Government would not or could not furnish them in time to permit his division to take the field with the rest of the corps a few weeks

later. He, therefore, remained in camp keeping watch and ward over northeastern Mississippi and west Tennessee, but as the war in that region ended with Hood's defeat, Hatch's splendid division took no effective part in the last campaign.

I have always felt that I made a serious mistake in leaving this division behind. I am now certain that it would have been far better to march it on foot behind the corps as a reserve, with the expectation of mounting it with horses captured or impressed from the enemy as the campaign progressed. Had I to do it over again I should certainly follow that course.

Hatch's senior brigadier, Datus E. Coon of Iowa, doubtless Kuhn originally, was a solid and serious man, much like Miller in general characteristics. He had had first-class experience, was full of resources, and knew neither fear nor discouragement. His career throughout the war was in the highest degree praiseworthy and honorable.

Hatch's second brigade commander was Colonel Stewart of Indiana, a brilliant, dashing, and experienced soldier, equal to anything that might have been demanded of him.

R. W. Johnson, commanding the Sixth Division, was a West Pointer of high character and long experience. He had been chief of cavalry and knew the needs of that arm as well as any man in the service. His brigade commanders, Harrison of Indiana and Palmer of Pennsylvania, were men of unusual ability, but, as General Thomas directed me to leave the division in middle Tennessee under his special orders, its services, except at Nashville and in the pursuit of Hood, constitute but a small part

of the corps' history. Palmer, early the next spring, while the rest of us were "breaking things down in Georgia," sallied out through east Tennessee into the region through which the rebel chieftains were endeavoring to make their way to the trans-Mississippi and did valuable service in the general windup.

Joseph F. Knipe of Pennsylvania commanded the Seventh Division with energy and ability, taking an active part in all the engagements from Nashville to the Duck River. He was nervous, gallant, and enterprising, slight in person, cheerful in manner, and entirely subordinate in behavior. Hammond, commanding his first brigade, was a New Yorker by birth, but a Kentuckian by adoption, with liberal education and plenty of enterprise and spirit. He was for several years Sherman's adjutant general and chief-of-staff, but, falling sick, he reported at Nashville after Sherman began marching through Georgia and asked for service with me. Having known him well in the Vicksburg and Chattanooga campaigns, I had him brevetted brigadier general, and gave him command of Capron's old brigade. While he had never commanded troops, he was an officer of great intelligence, energy, and courage, and as such rendered valuable services in the defeat and expulsion of Hood from Tennessee. Throwing himself earnestly and enthusiastically into the work of drilling and refitting his brigade, he again fell sick, and, learning from the chief surgeon that his ailment was of such nature that he could not withstand the fatigue of another campaign, I relieved and sent him to the rear for treatment.

Before my winter's work was completed, those in authority ordered me to send one division, fully

mounted, armed, and equipped, by transport to Canby, on the lower Mississippi, and I selected Knipe's for the detail, with such remounts as he would need from Hatch's division. He embarked five thousand strong, with everything complete for an active campaign, but rendered no useful service in the windup. He and his gallant comrades were merged with Canby's other mounted troops, and, while they made a coöperating expedition from the neighborhood of Mobile to the lower Chattahoochee, they met with no resistance and were too far out of the way to be of any service in the last campaign.

With Kilpatrick's division sent to Sherman, Knipe's to Canby, Johnson's to middle Tennessee, and Hatch's to remain in northwestern Alabama, the Cavalry Corps which I had assembled and got ready for service was reduced from seven divisions, approximately thirty-five thousand men, to three divisions of about twelve thousand five hundred mounted and one thousand five hundred dismounted men. Thus that magnificent body of cavalry and mounted infantry, with a full complement of horse artillery, constituting a mounted army equal to any military task that might fall to its lot, was divided and again widely scattered. Had the Confederacy not collapsed or had its leaders concentrated its armies in a final effort, this dispersion of our cavalry might have been a fatal error. And yet it is conceivable that the course of the war in the spring of 1865 might easily have been such as to bring together those widely scattered divisions somewhere between central Georgia and south Virginia. At all events, that was what I worked for to the end. Six or eight weeks more might have seen my seven divi-

sions of about five thousand men each, or a total of thirty-five thousand men in the saddle, reunited in Virginia. With that done and the force divided into two army corps, one for Upton, it would have given Sherman such flanks as no modern army ever had. With Sheridan's twelve thousand sabers, the entire mounted force under Grant, not counting outlying detachments and regiments, would have amounted to nearly fifty thousand men for duty, and every professional soldier at least would have watched with intense interest the decisive part which such a mounted force must have played in closing one of the greatest wars of modern times.

While the true function of history is to chronicle events as they actually occur, rather than to speculate upon what might have taken place under different conditions, it is, nevertheless, worth while to point out obvious mistakes and to show not only how they might have been avoided, but how the same or better results might have been gained with less expense or with greater certainty. All useful military criticism is based upon this principle, and hence it has always been a matter of regret that the splendid Cavalry Corps which I had the honor of forming out of its widely scattered elements serving in the Military Division of the Mississippi was again scattered before it had the opportunity of showing its irresistible power against the enemy. It is this feeling that made me sympathize so deeply with the deliberate and serious-minded Long, who said while suffering from a bullet wound in the scalp: "General, I am sorry that this war did not last just six weeks longer, for that would have brought us to Virginia, alongside of Sheridan's

'gayoso cavalry,' and I am sure we should have fanned the wind out of their sails, and shown them how cavalry should both march and fight."

That was the spirit which inspired both officers and men of the western cavalry, and it is fair to add that it was due, not only to their real quality and character, but to the policy of collecting them into a single corps and hurling them in close co-operation with infantry on the flanks, rear, and communications of the enemy, or of sending them on independent operations against the interior of the enemy's country in such overwhelming masses as to make them irresistible.

It has been my pleasant privilege to commend my division and brigade commanders in this narrative with some particularity. If not natural leaders of the highest quality, as several of them undoubtedly were, they were from aptitude and experience most unusual men, true Americans in hardihood, self-reliance, and soldierly requirements, and, therefore, capable of overcoming every obstacle they might encounter and of accomplishing every task that might fall to their lot. And this was true not only of division and brigade commanders, but of regimental and company officers as well. Drawn from every calling and condition of the plain people, they had become good and self-reliant soldiers, free from airs and pretensions, and inured by actual experiences to all the tasks and vicissitudes of the mounted service. The weaklings had been weeded out, leaving the best to fight the war through and reëstablish the Union forever.

As our work at Gravelly Springs was drawing to a close Thomas paid me a visit for the purpose

of looking over my command and conferring with me about future operations. General Grant had directed him, after sending my Seventh division to Canby, to detach me with a force of "say five thousand men to make a demonstration on Tuscaloosa and Selma." Evidently both Grant and the War Department, although doing but little in Virginia, intended that Thomas and his army should make no pause, but continue their operations indefinitely through the winter. They apparently did not understand that, although the weather was generally milder in the country south of the Tennessee than farther north, the streams would be swollen and the roads impassable till the winter rains were over and the roads had measurably dried out. Just what they counted upon or expected from Thomas, whom they had promoted to a major general of the regular army and who had fallen heir to the fragmentary command Sherman had left behind him, they never made clear. They sent Schofield with one army corps to the east, Smith with another to the northwestern corner of Alabama, and Wood to Huntsville. In other words, they scattered their infantry as well as the splendid body of cavalry I had got together with so much trouble. Fortunately, however, in passing seventeen thousand troopers in review before Thomas, I convinced him that a "demonstration" in any direction would be a useless waste of strength and, if permitted to go with my whole available force into central Alabama, I would not only defeat Forrest and such other troops as I might encounter, but would capture Tuscaloosa, Selma, Montgomery, and Columbus, and destroy the Confederacy's last depots of manufacture and sup-

ply and break up its last interior line of railway communications.

Thomas, with sound judgment, heartily agreed to my representations, telegraphed Grant, fully approving them, and earnestly requested that I should be permitted to carry them into effect. Grant not only gave his consent at once, but directed that I should be allowed all "the latitude of an independent commander." Much to my gratification, this relieved me from direct responsibility to either Sherman or Thomas. It will be recalled that the former, in sending me back to help Thomas, suggested that as soon as we disposed of Hood I should gather all the cavalry I could get my hands on and then sweep down through Alabama and Georgia to join him wherever he might be found, either in the Carolinas or on the march to Virginia, for the purpose of taking part in the final struggle between Grant and Lee. This wise policy I had kept constantly in mind, and, now that Hood had been beaten and driven out and I had collected and organized the greatest body of cavalry the country ever had, remounted and rearmed most of its men, and supplied the whole with everything necessary to take the field, I was naturally anxious to carry that policy and those instructions into effect. It was the great opportunity of my life and, with the hearty support of my officers of all grades, I felt perfectly certain of success.

While engaged in remounting, refitting and instructing my command, a lady of the neighborhood got permission to visit Nashville on a shopping expedition. I gave her a safeguard in addition, but she had gone only two days when Lieutenant Rodney

of the horse artillery reported at headquarters with the lady's pocketbook, her pass, and two hundred and fifty dollars in gold which one of his men had picked up and passed on to him through the regular channels. Recognizing the pass at once, I put the pocketbook and its contents in my field desk. Two weeks later the lady called to report her return, whereupon I asked what kind of a trip she had had. To this she replied that she had had a most successful one, but that she had lost her pocketbook and money and had been compelled to borrow for her purchases. At this I reached into my desk and handed her the pocketbook with its contents intact. Of course, she received it with surprise and then grew desperately pale, as though she were about to faint. Seeing her agitation, I asked what was the matter, to which she replied: "Oh, the Confederacy is doomed, the Confederacy is doomed! It cannot prevail against an army in which such discipline exists! This surpasses anything I ever dreamed of. Had my pocketbook been found by Confederate soldiers, I should certainly never have seen it again!"

From the time I took post at Gravelly Springs I, of course, lost no opportunity to gather information of what was going on in eastern Mississippi and central Alabama. I soon learned that Forrest had command of all the Confederate cavalry in that region; that Wheeler with his corps had followed Sherman into the Carolinas; that Hood had been relieved at his own request in northern Mississippi; that he had given his infantry and artillery furlough for twenty days; and, finally, that all the Confederates in those important states were on the defen-

sive. But, knowing that Forrest was a determined and resourceful commander, I did my best through spies, scouts, flags of truce and other available means, not only to confirm this information, but to ascertain at what place he had ordered his troops to reassemble. While he had evidently begun to despair of the Confederacy from the time he took command of Hood's rear guard, he betrayed no weakness, but put forth ceaseless energy and activity in the reorganization of his own corps and for the defense of the great stretch of country committed to his care. To this end he gathered all absentees from the ranks he could find, mercilessly shot deserters, and conscripted every able-bodied man fit for military service. While doing his best to fill up his ranks, he also sent his picked and trusty scouts, most of whom were Tennesseeans, to locate our camps, estimate our numbers, and gather such information as might throw light on our plans and future movements.

But this, as already seen, was a game at which two could play. My spies and scouts were as good and resourceful as Forrest's and it was not long before they located his command, estimated his strength, and got a fair idea of his plans and expectations. My conclusion was that Forrest's main body under Chalmers, Buford, and Jackson, with Wirt Adams's and Roddy's outlying brigades, would have a force of not less than ten thousand men and possibly twelve thousand, and that with the cooperation of those veteran leaders it would be easy for him to thwart any demonstration made by a few thousand Union cavalry.

In order, however, that no precaution should be

neglected and no information left unsought, I sent Captain Hosea of the regular army, one of my most intelligent officers, with a flag of truce, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners with Forrest, and, incidentally, to interview that wily commander, to study his frame of mind, and to gather such information as he could get in regard to the country, its food supplies and military resources. In short, he was instructed to keep his eyes open and play the game before him for all in sight. Forrest, whom he found at West Point, Mississippi, received him politely and entertained him with true Southern hospitality. While Forrest declined to consider any arrangement for the exchange of prisoners, he seemed to be in no hurry to get rid of his visitor. He talked freely on all subjects except numbers and plans. He seemed curious to learn what he could about me and my career. He had never heard of me till I confronted him on Duck River in November, and did not know whether I was a regular or a volunteer, a young man or an old one, but when Hosea told him that I was a West Pointer, an officer of engineers, had recently commanded a division of Sheridan's cavalry, and had some knowledge of tactics, strategy, and military organization, he seemed to be greatly interested. In the conversation he dropped the remark that he had rubbed his back "against no college" and knew nothing of military tactics, except what he had learned in actual campaigning. Then he added reflectively: "But I always make it a rule to get there first with the most men." After announcing this sound, fundamental principle, he continued somewhat contemptuously: "But you can tell your General that I would give more for fifteen minutes

of the bulge on him than for three days of tactics." He apparently cared but little for regular formations or for the lessons of the military books. He spoke contemptuously of the saber and declared his preference for the "repeater" or revolver as the true weapon for the charge and the mêlée. He valued courage and dash over the formal methods of the old school soldiers. He showed great confidence in himself and his followers and finally said in bidding his guest good-bye: "Captain, you can tell General Wilson that I have picked out a first rate place for a cavalry battle down here and if he'll come down with any force he pleases, I'll meet him with the same number and agree to whip the fight."

From Hosea's report a few days later, supplemented by information from other sources, I became satisfied that Forrest would be my principal opponent and that his line of operations would be from his main camp at West Point toward central Alabama, across my advance, and that I would have to march rapidly to beat him to the important points in the field of operations.

I explained all this on the maps to General Thomas and from that moment had his entire support and confidence. Fully realizing that I would have strength enough, even without Hatch, to go where I pleased, he returned to Nashville and gave himself no farther care on my account. Meanwhile, Sherman was uneasy. About that time he sent a dispatch to Thomas, saying: "I suppose . . . Forrest is again scattered to get horses and men and to divert attention. . . . I would like to have him hunted down and killed, but doubt if we can do that

yet."[1] Forrest had, indeed, scattered his forces, but, withal, he was gathering horses and improving discipline and efficiency. Having been made a lieutenant general and put in charge of a cavalry department covering Alabama, Mississippi, and east Louisiana, to give him equal rank and command with Wheeler as well as with other rivals, he was now the main dependence of the Confederacy to resist hostile expeditions from Memphis, Vicksburg, and Baton Rouge. He knew also that Canby was threatening Mobile and that another Federal force was gathering at Pensacola. While he overestimated our various columns at seventy-five thousand men, we are told by his biographers that it was my command on the Tennessee River which gave him the greatest concern and that he clearly foresaw that my principal object would be the destruction of the Confederate arsenal at Selma. So firmly was he convinced of this that he moved his own headquarters to West Point and began the concentration of his troops in that region. Early in March he took the precaution to have the various roads leading toward Tuscaloosa, Selma, and the west newly sign-boarded, and marked with crosses and blazes in such manner that the most stupid of his subordinates could find their way.[2]

By the first of March my command was ready to move, but, unfortunately, heavy rains flooded the country and raised the streams, which delayed my movement, much to my sorrow, for fully three weeks. So violent and continuous was the downpour that the Tennessee was soon out of its banks and a large

[1] O. R. Serial No. 94, pp. 621 *et seq.*

[2] Wyeth's "Life of Forrest," pp. 584 *et seq.*

quantity of the quartermaster's stores near the steamboat landing were swept away, and this added to our difficulties through the first hundred miles south of the river. We should have had grain enough to feed our horses for five days at least.

While trying to get ready for an early start I wrote frequently to Rawlins, Porter, and Badeau at Grant's headquarters, touching matters of common interest, such as the relief of Butler from further command, the fate of Baldy Smith, and the promotion of Thomas, Schofield, Wood, and other western generals. I referred to the futility of the effort to capture Wilmington, the rise of gold, and the abolition of slavery. Finally I commented on the fact that, while I had the largest corps in the army, the President had not yet formally approved its corps organization or given my staff the rank to which they were fairly entitled by their deserts and good works.

On March 7 I wrote as follows:

. . . I am sorry your letters find me here instead of on the road to Dixie as the General expects and as I hoped. This is the only time in my life I was ever ordered to start by a certain date and could not do it. My command was all ready, everything in tip-top order, but the extraordinary rains and flood in the Tennessee have stopped everything. My cantonments were located on the north side of the river for many reasons, all good. My command by its present condition clearly proves my wisdom in the matter. The Tennessee is higher than ever before known, though, thank heaven, it has begun to fall rapidly, and unless it rains again in three or four days I shall be able to get to the river bank and begin crossing. Once on the south side I can start whenever I choose; and as soon as possible, of

course. Please explain this to the General, and tell him I shall not lose a moment in getting away.

The first eighty miles will be severe for my command, as the region is entirely desolate. Once through it, however, I think we shall experience no great difficulty in living. Tell the General I wrote a note to Babcock in which I gave my views of what my command is capable of doing. It may be the fifteenth or sixteenth, even with favorable weather, before I can march. I am most anxious lest my delay may not be sufficiently explained, but I venture to hope the General will not lose any of his confidence in my promptitude and determination, and also that the delay will be really advantageous to our cause. At all events, it has been simply impossible to cross the river and impossible to move out after we were over. . . .

I am sure my command is a good one, well organized, and in fine condition. I am sorry to know that General Halleck is allowed to prevent the approval of the corps organization. If seven divisions of cavalry with over twenty-five thousand men mounted and doing duty are not entitled to a corps organization, I am sure I do not know what is. I am anxious about it only because I want my staff to have for their duty all the rank they can get. I know there is no corps in the army better entitled to it, not one in which the staff has done half as much work and not one in which it is required to do as much. My officers have well earned their promotion and ought to have it.

However, if . . . the venture upon which we are about to start turns out right, the officers as well as the corps will win recognition. I have no fear that when Grant receives my report of operations he will do all for us we are entitled to. He may begin to look for it about the first of May, and, if matters work well, I shall present it in person with something between fifteen thousand and twenty thousand troopers to tell the story and cross sabers with the rebels in Virginia.

On March 20 I wrote from Chickasaw, Alabama:

. . . I expected to have been well on my way before this time. My command is all here in magnificent condition. Orders were given to march at half-past five this morning when information reached me that forage to supply us through the barrens of Alabama had not yet arrived. We must carry the forage, for my scouts report absolutely none in that region. The boats are expected with it every minute, and just as soon as they get here we shall be off.

Isn't it unfortunate that the rain cannot be controlled by General Grant? Had we not had the recent extraordinary floods in this country our grain would not have been destroyed. I am greatly provoked at the delay, but am powerless to help it. On the 11th inst. no advance had yet begun at Mobile, though the rebels thought they could see indications of an early movement on our part. Withal, I hope we shall be off in time to do good service. My command is certainly in magnificent condition, well armed, splendidly mounted, perfectly clad and equipped, and will turn out a heavier fighting force than ever before started on a similar expedition in this country. I am personally in the best of health and spirits.

Notwithstanding my anxiety and the arrival of the forage, my actual advance did not begin till the morning of March 22, but this was fully a week earlier than they were able to start with the Army of the Potomac. It is a striking coincidence that, while we had to march fully a hundred and fifty miles and fight our way over the last third of it to Selma against the active opposition of Forrest and his cavalry, Sheridan had only to march about a tenth of that distance to meet Hampton and his cavalry at Dinwiddie Court House. It is a still more interesting coincidence that Selma and Richmond, fully a thousand miles apart by the traveled roads, fell on the same day, April 2, 1865.

# VI

## CAMPAIGN AND CAPTURE OF SELMA

Line of march through northern Alabama—Passage of the rivers—Face to face with Forrest—Forrest's mistakes—Defeat and pursuit of Forrest—Capture of Tuscaloosa—Close in on Selma—Assault and capture of Selma—Results and summary of campaign.

While the campaigns then opening east and west were destined to be the last of the war, none of us had any adequate idea of the important part ours was to play in closing the great drama. The extracts from private correspondence show that I had definite ideas of what should be done and definite hopes of the results, but neither I nor anyone else foresaw the overwhelming success the cavalry army under my command finally achieved.

As before stated, I started from the Tennessee River with McCook's, Upton's, and Long's divisions, all mounted and equipped, twelve thousand five hundred men in the saddle, with a battery of four guns to each division, and one brigade, or one thousand five hundred dismounted men, to act as train guard and reserve till we could capture horses enough to remount them. We also had one light pontoon train of thirty canvas boats, hauled by fifty six-mule

teams, escorted by Major Hubbard with a battalion of the Twelfth Missouri Cavalry.

Each trooper carried five days' light rations, one pair of horseshoes, and one hundred rounds of ammunition on his saddle. We also had a supply train of two hundred and fifty wagons, carrying forty-five days' rations of coffee, twenty of sugar, fifteen of salt, and eighty rounds of ammunition, besides five days' rations of hard bread and ten of sugar and salt on pack animals. My calculation was that these supplies, with what we could gather from the country, although the first half of our march lay through a desolate region, would be sufficient for a campaign of sixty days, at the end of which we should reach a new base in Georgia, the Carolinas, or Virginia. As trains in a country of good roads are a great impediment to cavalry, I directed the division commanders to send the "extra wagons" back to the Tennessee as fast as emptied.

This order gave rise to a laughable incident which my adjutant general did not hear the last of for some time. When Long received it he made the mistake of reading "majors" for "wagons" and replied that, as he had no "extra majors," he could not comply with the instructions. Of course, a few hours straightened out the misunderstanding and relieved his division of its "extra wagons."

Hoping that the promised horses would soon reach Hatch, I ordered him to follow with his fine division of over six thousand men as soon as possible, but, much to our common disappointment, the horses never came and he took but little part in the closing operations of the war. Could I have been sure of securing the large number of horses and

mules we captured at Selma and found in the enemy's country, I should have taken Hatch along, as I have elsewhere said, thereby increasing my train guard and reserve to fully eight thousand and raising my entire force to twenty-two thousand men. With the experience gained in the campaign through Selma, Columbus, and Macon, I am sure I should have had an ideal command, every man of which could have been well mounted before we reached the Chattahoochee River.

From that day I have held that in a farming country, fairly well supplied with forage, an invading force, consisting of two-thirds cavalry and one-third infantry, with one field-gun for each thousand men, would be the most effective organization, for the large mounted force would enable it to move rapidly, much more rapidly, indeed, than would be possible for infantry. And, moving rapidly, it could strike the flanks, rear and communications of the enemy much more effectively than would be possible with infantry alone. As celerity of movement is the most variable factor in modern military operations, that force which moves most rapidly can place itself in the best position for effective service.

In beginning the invasion I started my columns on divergent routes for the purpose of confusing the enemy, whose headquarters, first at Verona and later at West Point, Mississippi, were about one hundred miles southwest of mine, as to my plans and of giving the greatest possible celerity to my movements. Upton's division took the route through Russelville, Mount Hope, and Jasper to Saunder's Ford, on the west branch of the Black Warrior River. Long's took the middle road by

Cherokee's Station and Frankford and thence south by the Byler road toward Tuscaloosa to upper Bear Creek, where it turned east to the same ford of the Black Warrior. McCook's division followed Long's, but passed beyond as far as Eldridge, where it also turned to the east. In this way they scooped up all the food and forage that could be found in the bottom farms, and kept well out of each other's way. While each commander was left to regulate the details of his own march, every precaution was taken to get through the country as rapidly as possible. It was throughout a hilly, gravelly, and barren region, covered with dense forests of pine and oak, broken here and there by the small clearings of poor white folks. The valleys are deep and narrow and the roads which threaded them much of the way were often almost impassable for lack of bridges and from the presence of quicksand and quagmires. While both men and horses could pick their way and make fair progress, especially along the ridges, it was frequently necessary to construct corduroy roads in order to get the artillery and wagons forward at all.

Fortunately, the enemy was badly scattered. He had gathered his principal force close to the Alabama and Mississippi line, near the crossing of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and the railroad from Vicksburg to Montgomery and Atlanta. Department headquarters under Lieutenant General Taylor were at Meridian, while Forrest with cavalry headquarters was at West Point, some forty or fifty miles farther north. In view of the fact that Selma, the seat of the great Confederate arsenal, manufactories, and storehouses, and Montgomery, the first capital

of the seceding states, were the chief objectives of our campaign, the disposition of the Confederate forces was decidedly unfavorable to their operations, but exceedingly favorable to ours. It had but one thing to recommend it. It would have facilitated concentration after the fall of Selma for the defense of the region to the westward.

It will be remembered that Canby had a strong army threatening Mobile; Grierson and Knipe with Canby's cavalry were arranging to move eastward from the Mississippi; Thomas, with one corps of infantry and two divisions of cavalry, occupied middle Tennessee, ready to move in any direction offering the greatest attraction. Not knowing who would strike first, the enemy was slow in divining my movement and still slower in concentrating to resist it. He was far too much spread out watching a vast extent of country and was nowhere strong. Indeed, but for Roddy's small force operating from Montevallo toward the Tennessee, we should not have known we were moving through a hostile region till we crossed both forks of the Black Warrior and reached the Cahawba valley. And yet the first half of our march was not without anxiety. Forrest was an aggressive and swiftly marching enemy, and no one could tell when we might find him in the front. I, therefore, kept scouts and patrols well out with a view to getting the first possible intimation of his approach. It is now known that he did not personally leave West Point till March 28, six days after I left Waterloo Landing, and even then he regarded my force as mere raiders which might be driven back without much trouble.

It now appears from the Official Records that

both Taylor and Forrest were looking for the principal invasion of central Alabama to come from Canby's department, and hence all their dispositions prior to the discovery of my advance were made to cover Montgomery and Selma from the south rather than from the north. While they held the principal part of their cavalry and such infantry as they could gather well in hand near the railroad crossing in the western part of the state, they directed Buford's division first to Montevallo to support Roddy and afterward to the south side of the Alabama River to cover Selma and Montgomery against a movement from the Gulf coast. Roddy, with such help as Dan Adams, the district commander, could give, was to watch the movements from the Tennessee.

Forrest himself, however, had his own eyes on the roads to both Montevallo and Tuscaloosa. By the direct route the distance from West Point to Montevallo was about one hundred and twenty-five miles, while it was considerably more by the way of Tuscaloosa, either to Montevallo or to Selma. But, as the Sipsey, the Black Warrior, and the Tombigbee, with all their affluents, were out of their banks and still high from the same rains that delayed us, Forrest's concentration and march to the eastward, even after he learned we were in motion, were comparatively slow. As his escort moved much faster than either division, within four days he was in our front, while Chalmers and Jackson were straggling along toward the Cahawba and Selma.

As early as March 7 Beauregard, the supervising generalissimo, with headquarters on the railroad, reported to Lee at Petersburg that he would be unable

to resist anything more than a cavalry raid[1] in the direction of Selma and Montgomery, whereupon Lee, now a real dictator, authorized him to select any other place for concentration and defense that promised greater safety. The next day he mentioned Forrest for the first time as lieutenant general and directed him to garrison Selma, from which it will be seen that Lee, at least, had a correct understanding of that stronghold as a strategic center. Had Beauregard, Taylor, and Forrest comprehended that essential fact as clearly as did their common chief and concentrated their forces within its fortifications, as they could easily have done, they might have made a more fortunate campaign than the one which burst upon them a few days later.

On March 11 Beauregard reported Forrest's and Roddy's cavalry at "about twelve thousand men,"[2] and Forrest could doubtless have got that number together had he dropped all other tasks and given his whole time to concentrating either at Tuscaloosa, Marion Junction, or Selma. But, fortunately for us, a multiplicity of minds and orders prevented the adoption of any coherent or well-defined policy. It will be remembered that the cavalry corps under Forrest consisted of four divisions, commanded respectively by Jackson, Chalmers, Buford, and Roddy, with a few infantry and other outlying detachments operating more or less independently. Their cavalry was approximately three thousand five hundred men to the division, and, although a considerable number of Tennesseeans, Kentuckians, and Mississippians were still absent from the

[1] O. R. Serial No. 103, p. 1035.
[2] O. R. Serial No. 103, p. 1048.

colors, and stragglers and deserters increased as soon as active operations began, I have never doubted that Forrest could have confronted us with at least ten thousand men in the saddle, had he understood the situation or got timely notice of our advance. Wyeth gives Chalmers's division on March 24, 1865 at three thousand six hundred and forty-eight men, while Forrest reported to Taylor on March 6 that as soon as the waters receded he could place Jackson in the field with almost two thousand five hundred effective men, though we always estimated his force at from three thousand to three thousand five hundred.

From the Official Records and the narratives of Jordan and Wyeth it appears that Forrest himself was uncertain from the start as to the strength of my columns and the direction in which they might move. On March 13 he frankly said: . . . "I have sent two flags of truce up to them, besides have thrown out sufficient scouts to learn their real movements."[1] The next day, although his mind was made up, he asked Chalmers if he "could be ready to march day after to-morrow morning to Montevallo."[2]

On March 18 Forrest was at West Point, writing a vigorous letter to Breckenridge, Confederate secretary of war, and another to Taylor, protesting against the policy of sending officers into west Tennessee, northern Alabama, and Mississippi for the purpose of organizing and bringing out the large number of deserters and stragglers who were infesting those regions and living by plunder and rob-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 103, p. 1030, Forrest to Taylor.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 1060, Forrest to Chalmers.

bery.[1] Roddy wrote in a similar strain, and both at that date were acting on matters of policy exactly as though they expected the war to continue indefinitely. While Wyeth tells us that Forrest, although claiming to be the savior of Hood's army, had lost all hope for the final success of the Confederacy, and that he "was fully impressed with the hopelessness of the struggle, but as a soldier he was in honor bound to fight to the bitter end." . . .[2] It is evident, however, that Hood's overwhelming defeat and expulsion from Tennessee had greatly discouraged Davis, Lee, Beauregard, Johnston, and Taylor, though it failed to give any one of them a definite conception of the impending catastrophe or a definite plan for averting it. This was, perhaps, natural enough for those at a distance, but it is difficult to understand how it was that neither Taylor nor Forrest had the slightest conception of the real danger, nor the slightest idea of the direction from which it was to come till March 27 brought the information that my corps had crossed the Tennessee and was advancing toward Jasper.

On March 22 Taylor telegraphed Forrest: . . .

. . . General Stephen D. Lee . . . yesterday reports enemy concentrating at Knoxville. Your main force will move either to middle Tennessee or across Tombigbee to Greenville.[3]

The next day he telegraphed:

Enemy moving up from Pensacola. Start all troops . . . at once for Greenville via Selma, where there is a pontoon.[4]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, pp. 1124-26.

[2] Wyeth's "Life of Forrest," p. 578.

[3] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 1144.

[4] *Ib.*, p. 1146.

On that day Forrest ordered Armstrong's brigade to Selma, and here it should be noticed that Armstrong's brigade is the only one that reached that place in time to take position within its defenses.

As late as March 24 Taylor still thought Canby "might give Mobile the go-by and march on Selma or Montgomery," in which case, he added, "it might become necessary to suddenly throw six or seven thousand infantry up the river from Mobile to assist the cavalry."[1]

On the same day Forrest ordered Chalmers to start Starke's brigade after Armstrong,[2] and gave notice that Wirt Adams should follow in the same direction, while he and Taylor would review Jackson's division and Crossland's, late Lyon's, brigade at West Point, and that immediately after the review Crossland should set out to report to Dan Adams at Montevallo for the purpose of relieving Roddy, who was ordered south. It was not till the 25th that Taylor directed Forrest to push Chalmers with his other brigades as rapidly as possible by the way of Tuscaloosa to Selma, and that Jackson should follow without delay . . . "to meet raid from below."[3] The distance to be covered was from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and sixty miles, and, although the roads were bad and the streams were high, with due diligence the time was sufficient. But with the delay for the review and the uncertainty as to our advance, it will appear in the course of this narrative that Forrest's loss

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 1148.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 1150.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 1155.

of time was both irreparable and fatal. It is certain that he had as yet no news of my actual movements. Buford was still south of the river, looking to the junction with Armstrong, advancing through Selma for the purpose of guarding the roads from the Gulf coast.

On March 26, however, Taylor seems to have got news of my having reached Russellville, whereupon he instructed Forrest that Jackson, following Crossland . . . "should meet, whip, and get rid of" my column, while Wirt Adams and Scott should stand off any force coming from the Mississippi. As if to emphasize these instructions, he added: "Our plan is to meet and whip these detached columns before they can unite with each other. You had better, soon as possible, move [by rail] via Meridian to Selma, whence you can assume direction of Chalmers's, Jackson's, and Buford's movements." . . .[1]

The next day Taylor telegraphed Forrest, still at West Point . . . "a large and well-equipped cavalry corps is moving from north Alabama,"[2] and to Dan Adams that "Forrest, with three brigades, moving via Tuscaloosa, is intercepting the raid from above."[3] On the 28th he telegraphed Beauregard that . . . "a heavy force of Thomas' cavalry is moving down through north Alabama"; and to Maury at Mobile: . . . "The Lieutenant General commanding hopes in three or four days to whip the large raids moving from north Alabama, and will then be in condition to as-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 1160.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 1164.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 1165.

sist you with all the force of the department."[1] . . . All this was reported to Lee, the dictator, and by Lee to the Confederate Secretary of War.

The truth was beginning to dawn upon the Confederate authorities. Forrest learned it as soon as anyone, but no sooner. Having made such dispositions as his means allowed to meet the expeditions he supposed to be "threatening from Memphis" and from the Mississippi below, he took the road eastward on the 28th, and the next day was at Sipsey Bridge, where, after shooting "two deserters," one of whom claimed to be too old and the other too young for military service, he directed Jackson to detach an officer and twenty men to guard the crossings, to bury the dead, and to execute such other deserters as they might catch.[2] His blood was up against his own people as well as against "the Yankees," and, spurring to the front, he was "nine miles from Centerville, on the Montevallo road, at 2 P. M. March 30." Here he issued an untimely order countermarching Jackson's column and sending him new instructions.

This was his first mistake and the beginning of a series. The race was now on for Selma and it remained only to decide whether Forrest, Chalmers, Jackson, Buford, Roddy, Armstrong, Crossland, and Adams could get there before McCook, Long, Upton, Croxton, LaGrange, Minty, Miller, Alexander, and Winslow. Hitherto the Confederate cavalrymen had been rarely caught napping, but the National

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 1167.

[2] "Life of General Forrest," by John A. Wyeth, p. 589, and O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 1172, Strange to Jackson.

leaders had learned their lessons at last and, henceforth, let no grass grow under their feet.

Had Forrest moved with his usual celerity straight across country to Tuscaloosa or south of it, he would have reached Selma with all his force before we could have struck him or any of his detachments. This was clearly his better course and, had he followed it, his chances for stopping or standing us off, if not for defeating us in the end, would have been far more promising. But the chance of meeting Forrest and his forces before we got out of the barrens into the rich country below was not the worst of our dangers. The spring was an unusually rainy one and it was a source of constant apprehension both to Forrest and myself that a heavy downpour might put the creeks and rivers again out of their banks, which in turn would have made it impossible to cross the broadest of them without considerable delay. Fortunately, although we had no Weather Bureau, a good many of our officers had become sufficiently weatherwise to know what winds and conditions would bring rain. I had acquired enough skill to prognosticate with a fair degree of certainty.

The Mulberry fork of the Black Warrior is a wide and rapid stream with a gorge-like bed between hills five or six hundred feet high on either side, and is unusually difficult to cross anywhere except by bridge or ferry. It was reported fordable beyond Jasper at ordinary low water, and this made it all the more necessary that we should reach it before the rains which were threatening should swell it unduly.

We, therefore, pushed on rapidly to Saunder's

Ford, which our advance reached early on the 27th. The rain set in during the night and the river had begun to rise, which made Upton fear at first that he could not cross without the pontoon train. But he was an officer who took nothing for granted, and soon ascertained by personal examination that the ford, although a hundred and fifty yards wide, was still passable. He found it composed of gravel and sand lodged against a rough ledge of rock connecting the hills on the opposite sides. Pushing boldly through the rushing stream in loose order, and taking every precaution to hurry his dripping horses up the muddy bank, Upton cleared the way for the following divisions before the river had risen enough to compel the rear of the column to swim. Several troopers were, however, swept away and one was drowned before assistance could reach him. The passage was most perilous, but the entire command got safely over, leaving the wagons in the forks of the river under a dismounted guard, while the column, thus lightened, pushed on to the Locust fork of the Black Warrior, which was also rising. Fortunately, it was still passable, and, as the crossing was also made with great rapidity, it was soon left behind. The roads beyond were in better condition and, as the enemy offered but slight resistance, we pushed rapidly through Elyton to the Cahawba River.

Elyton at that time was a poor, insignificant Southern village, surrounded by old field farms, most of which could have been bought at five dollars per acre. It presented no evidence of ever becoming a great city or the seat of the iron and steel industry of the Southern states. Having taken posi-

tion on the top of an overlooking ridge to inspect the passing column, I was deeply impressed by the poverty-stricken and uninviting appearance of the landscape. It was, of course, known to the geologists that the ridges dividing the river valleys contained large deposits of both coal and iron in proximity to each other. A few blast-furnaces had been erected in the adjacent region and pig-iron had been produced in considerable quantities for the arsenal and foundries at Selma, but there was no sign whatever of the tremendous movement which a few years later made Birmingham the coal and iron center of that remarkable field. At that time the farms and villages were poor and primitive, the yield of corn and cotton insignificant, and the people without hope. It is now one of the most flourishing manufacturing districts in the United States.

While at Jasper on the 27th my scouts reported Armstrong's brigade of Chalmers's division some forty or fifty miles south of us moving through Bridgeville and Tuscaloosa toward Selma. This was a distinct admonition that we should quicken our own speed so as to cross the Cahawba and reach the district about Montevallo before the enemy could interpose to delay us. I knew that Forrest, as soon as he discovered our real direction, would lose no time in throwing his whole available force in front of us. It was now raining hard, the streams were again rising rapidly, and this made it necessary to march all night in order to reach and cross the Cahawba and to get into the open and more prosperous country beyond. Happily, Upton and his brigade commanders, Winslow and Alexander, were full of energy and enterprise which no difficulty

could thwart or discourage. Reaching the banks of the Cahawba ahead of the pontoon train, they found the ford obstructed by fallen trees and impassable. But, turning downstream, they came shortly to the railroad bridge near Hillsboro and rushed upon it before the enemy's pickets could set it on fire. Both the bridge and the trestles connecting it with the highland were then floored over with cross-ties, making it safe for horses and men. By these means we crossed the river and soon left it behind. This was a notable feat, well illustrating the enterprise and energy of the western cavalry. Not an hour was lost and, although the actual passage on account of the rude roadway was relatively slow, it took the entire corps safely into a region abounding in forage, corn, bacon, chickens, turkeys, and other comforts for hungry soldiers. But, what was still more important, was the fact that it brought us quickly to the state road leading directly south to the stronghold which was the main object of our campaign.

To make sure that Armstrong and those following in the same direction should not interfere with or delay our advance, I detached Croxton near Elyton on the evening of March 30 to march rapidly on Tuscaloosa, which was not only the seat of the Alabama Military College, but the center of a comparatively rich and populous region. After capturing the town and burning the public buildings, foundries, factories, stores and bridges, he was directed to rejoin the main column by the way of Centerville, where the direct road from Tuscaloosa to Selma crosses the Cahawba.

Croxton executed the first half of his orders after

some countermarching with an allowable precautionary delay. Tuscaloosa did not, however, fall into his hands till April 3, when the Military College, other public buildings, and property were destroyed, and ample supplies of every sort were captured. As Jackson's columns had passed on toward the Cahawba, Croxton occupied the town for the night, and it so happened that he found there several Confederate officers, with their fiancées, who had met for the purpose of getting married. Instead of forbidding the bans, the gallant Kentuckian gave his hearty consent and encouraged the contracting parties to proceed with the ceremony, which they gladly did. Early the next day he took the road again, but, fearing he might encounter more rebels than he cared to tackle, marching through or upon that important town, he turned northward for safety. As the direction of his original march lay in the main at right angles to that of the Confederates, it necessarily brought him into such contact with them as led to the confusion of both without any considerable advantage to either, except that Jackson and Chalmers, who were following Armstrong, were so delayed by the presence of an enemy in their rear and afterward on their flank that neither succeeded in crossing the Cahawba, without which it was impossible to confront my main column or in any way to delay the assault and capture of Selma. This was of great advantage to me and in itself justified the detachment of Croxton.

Meanwhile, my plan was clear and distinct from the first. I knew it was absolutely necessary that I should get through the barrens and across the creeks and rivers, and, leaving my impedimenta be-

hind, unite my columns at Montevallo, where I was sure we should have what all good cavalrymen want —an open country and a clear road to the front.

I reached Montevallo at one o'clock on March 31. Upton, having the lead, occupied the place at dusk the evening before and by the time he had given me the lay of the land, the location and direction of the roads, and the enemy's probable position, Long's division and LaGrange's brigade of McCook's division, free from all wheels except those of their batteries, had closed up and were ready to strike at the word. Upton's detachments had already destroyed or were engaged in destroying the Red Mountain, Bibb County, and Columbiana Iron Works, the Cahawba Valley Rolling Mills, and all the collieries within reach. All these establishments were in full operation and their destruction was a vital blow to the Confederacy, inasmuch as they were the source of the last and only raw materials and fuel for the arsenals, foundries, and navy yard at Selma.

My command present on the field mustered full nine thousand men and twelve field guns. Straggling had disappeared, and every trooper was in his place, eager for the fray and confident of victory. Not a minute had been lost and it so fell out, just as we were advancing, that we discovered the enemy on the Selma Road beyond the first field, with dense woods behind. Simultaneously our pickets reported him moving to the attack. As it turned out, Forrest was in our front. We were face to face at last. True to his own rule, he was striving with Roddy's division, Crossland's brigade, and Dan Adams' infantry and militia to strike the first blow. But we had

anticipated him and, as soon as advised of his advance, I ordered Upton, who was fully ready, "to sail in!" He was no laggard; his skirmishers from both brigades were already in line and, to add to their weight, the splendid regular battery was thrown well to the front, followed by Winslow, Noble, Benteen, Peters, Garrard, Eggleston, and Young, with guidons unfurled and the trumpets sounding the charge. In less time than it takes to tell it the rattle of cannon and carbine began. The enemy was checked, his formation broken, and his whole line overthrown and in retreat. Our skirmishers hastened to remount and with their supports joined promptly in hot pursuit. What Forrest thought has never been told, but he was a bold and resolute man, not easily overborne, and never rattled. Riding rapidly to the rear, he selected a new position covered by a creek some five miles south of Montevallo, and, again rallying his followers, made another stand in hopes of holding his position till nightfall. His men, and especially his Kentuckians, made a gallant fight. But Upton, aided by Alexander and Winslow, attacking both center and flanks, soon lifted him from his new position and drove him in confusion down the Selma road, till darkness put an end to the pursuit and gave his routed Confederates a few hours' rest.

Upton, flushed with victory, bivouacked that night fourteen miles south of Montevallo. The first day's work was a good one. Both cavalry and artillery had covered themselves with glory. They had crumpled up the enemy's line, capturing a number of prisoners with arms, accouterments, and loose material. Both officers and men had shown con-

spicuous gallantry and had gained for themselves and for the corps a moral supremacy over the enemy which they never lost. They had fairly "got the bulge on Forrest" and his followers and held it till the end.

At dawn on April 1 Upton again took the lead and, followed by Long and LaGrange, moved rapidly and irresistibly to Randolph. But soon after getting under way Upton had the good fortune to capture a rebel courier just from Centerville, on whose person he found three dispatches, which he sent me without delay. The first was from Forrest, dated six miles from Montevallo, March 31, 6 P. M., informing Jackson . . . "that the enemy are moving right on down the railroad with their wagon train and artillery," directing him . . . "to follow down after them, taking the road behind them from Montevallo," but cautioning him not . . . "to bring on a general engagement, as their force is much stronger than yours," and finally saying . . . "an engagement should be avoided unless you find the balance of our forces in supporting distance of you."[1]

The second dispatch was from Anderson, A. D. C., to Forrest, dated Centerville, April 1, 2 A. M., saying:

I opened the enclosed dispatch from General Jackson to ascertain his position, etc. Sent couriers last night at 11:30 to Chalmers and Mason. From reports received and from this dispatch, enemy's cavalry or a portion of it have crossed the Cahawba and General Jackson will attack them at daylight. I shall remain here for further orders and developments and at daylight will take one side of the river

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 173.

or the other. Have sent to General Jackson to know the position of his artillery. If the couriers can be relied on the enemy [Croxton] is between him and the battery. Have the dismounted men entrenched on this side east of the river, and if the enemy are as represented, will move the battery here, cross it over and move on the nearest road to Selma as directed. The courier can explain Jackson's position and that of the battery. From this statement the battery is in rear of General Jackson, on the Tuscaloosa road, and the enemy between his force and his artillery. Have heard nothing of General Armstrong, but sent orders to General Chalmers to move to or between the enemy and Selma. Will dispatch you all information as soon as received.[1]

The third dispatch was a "sub-enclosure," dated March 31, 8:45 P. M., from Jackson to James Hill, senior. The site of the encampment is not given, but it was doubtless on the road from Tuscaloosa to Centerville at Hill's Plantation, three miles from Scottsville. It runs as follows:

I find the enemy [Croxton] encamped on Huntsville and Tuscaloosa road at Whites, three miles from point where Huntsville road comes into Tuscaloosa Road, and six miles from this place. Their strength not yet ascertained. I am closing around them with a view of attacking, or if they move to-night will drive into them. I am placing a force between them and Tuscaloosa. Have also directed Colonel Cox, who is in charge of artillery and train some fifteen miles from here, that in case I do not gain their front and they advance on Tuscaloosa, to fall back before them, impeding their progress; to notify Colonel Hardcastle, commanding post [Tuscaloosa], to have everything in readiness to meet them and to tear up planks on the bridge and to remove them, nothing preventing. All appears bright and I expect success.[2]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 173. [2] *Ib.*, p. 174.

Shortly after intercepting these dispatches, I also received one written by Croxton at Trion, north of Tuscaloosa, the night before, informing me that he had struck Jackson's rear, and instead of pushing on toward Tuscaloosa as ordered, he would follow up Jackson and endeavor to bring him to an engagement, hoping thereby to prevent his junction with Forrest.

These dispatches, taken with the operations of the day before, made it clear that Forrest had met us in person near Montevallo, and helped by Roddy, Crossland, and Adams, was doing what he could to stay our progress; that Jackson with his division somewhat scattered was devoting his attention to Croxton instead of trying to get in my rear; that Croxton had interposed between him and his trains and, understanding his duty, was endeavoring to bring Jackson to an engagement; that Chalmers was still west of the Cahawba at or near Marion; and finally, that if I could seize and destroy the bridge at Centerville uniting LaGrange with Croxton, McCook might not only beat Jackson but render it certain that neither he nor Chalmers could cross the Cahawba to form a junction with Forrest except lower down the river where there were no bridges and no fords. In other words, I now knew exactly where every division and brigade of Forrest's corps was, that they were widely scattered and that if I could force the marching and the fighting with sufficient rapidity and vigor, I should have the game entirely in my hands. My greatest danger clearly was that Jackson might overwhelm Croxton in time to cross the Cahawba at Centerville and fall upon my rear while I was fighting Forrest in front. The best way

of preventing this was clearly to seize the Centerville bridge before the enemy could concentrate there to hold it.

As Randolph is abreast of Centerville only twelve or fifteen miles away, I directed McCook[1] to follow up the battalion already ordered there with a regiment and to follow that with the rest of LaGrange's splendid brigade, all to march as rapidly as possible on that point, capture the bridge, and open communications with Croxton. This done, McCook was directed to attack Jackson with his united division, scatter his forces and confuse him as much as possible, after which he was to fall back, burn the bridge at Centerville, and take the direct road for Selma. His entire outward march was about thirty-eight miles, and, although he did not leave Randolph till nearly 11 A. M., he was successful in driving the rebel force from Centerville, capturing the bridge, and pushing rapidly forward to Scottsville, eight miles beyond, but without finding either Jackson or Croxton. They were evidently engaged with each other. As the region in which they were operating was lacking in towns and highways, McCook, judging that he should not be led away on a wild-goose chase, returned to the bridge. After burning it he set out by the direct road toward Plantersville and Selma for the purpose of watching the crossings and preventing the enemy's outlying columns from getting into Selma ahead of him. But his movements were somewhat over-cautious, and, therefore, did not bring him to a junction with the corps till after Selma surrendered. This detachment has been criticised as weakening my force before

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 173.

the battle, but had Jackson, instead of following Croxton, kept on toward Centerville, McCook's movement would have been exactly the right one to prevent Jackson's junction with Forrest. And this, of course, was its primary purpose. McCook and Croxton together had effectually neutralized one of Forrest's strongest divisions. They had not only greatly confused Jackson, but by the destruction of the Centerville bridge had also confused Chalmers as well and had prevented both from taking any part in the fighting which occurred in the next thirty-six hours. I have also been criticised for detaching Croxton, and the reasons given for this criticism are similar to those given in the case of McCook and LaGrange. The answer is the same and the success of the two aggressive movements in keeping the bulk of Forrest's corps west of the Cahawba and thus allowing me to beat him in person by superiority of numbers, as well as by more rapid marching, was my complete justification.

Meanwhile Forrest was far from idle. Not satisfied with having directed Jackson to fall in behind and follow me down from Montevallo, he sent a courier to Chalmers directing him to push across the Cahawba with all possible celerity to Ebenezer Church, six miles north of Plantersville, for the purpose of joining Forrest and helping him stay my advance. This was a brilliant plan, but, like Johnston's for the destruction of Grant's army between Jackson and Vicksburg, it came too late and took too long to carry it out. Like Grant, I had inside lines, and, knowing it, determined to force the fighting, confident that it would result in my favor. Having taken care of both my right flank and rear, as

there was no danger to be apprehended from the left, it remained only to hurl my two splendid divisions with all possible speed against the enemy in front, which I knew they outnumbered. Having anticipated Forrest in his own game of getting on the rear of his opponent, I determined to allow him no rest but to overwhelm him if possible on the road, and, failing in that, to drive him inside the works of Selma as soon as possible.

Had Jackson and Chalmers been swifter than Croxton and McCook, the worst that could have happened would have been a battle between the entire strength of the two corps. Had Long and Upton been slower than they were in crossing the rivers and in reaching the main road through Montevallo to Selma, the two corps would doubtless have met head-on somewhere north of Selma. But even in that case the odds were in our favor, and we were fully justified in the expectation that we should be victorious.

As it turned out, Forrest received no substantial additions to his own column and, moving as we did, from twenty to thirty miles a day, with nine thousand sabers, it was easy to brush his three cavalry brigades and his infantry detachment out of the way and to bring my victorious and exultant force face to face with the fortifications of Selma.

I was constantly in close touch with Long and Upton, both of whom fully understood what the situation demanded of them.

In accordance with the order of march for the day, Upton at Randolph turned eastward to Old Maplesville, where he struck the main road to Selma, while Long pushed straight forward by the new road.

This gave us the advantage of two columns in close coöperation, nowhere more than two miles apart. Both promptly encountered small parties of the enemy evidently watching their approach, and with the impulse of yesterday's success in their blood, they drove the Confederates rapidly back on their main line, which Forrest had deployed in a strong position near Ebenezer Church. His right rested on Mulberry Creek, his center was behind Bogler's Creek, while his left occupied a high wooded ridge. Four field guns swept the Randolph road and two the road to Old Maplesville. The position, naturally a strong one, had been made still stronger by a fence rail barricade and a slashing of pine trees.

Forrest had at that place, as near as I can make out, something like five thousand, but both he and his biographer state it as less than two thousand men. It was made up of Roddy's division, Crossland's Kentucky brigade and Dan Adams' infantry and state troops from Selma. A detachment of Armstrong's brigade was also present and Armstrong himself with the rest of his troops was on the way, but did not reach there till dark, when all the fighting was over. Chalmers with Starke's and Dan Adams's brigades did not get there at all. Wyeth tells us that Chalmers sent a dispatch instead, saying that he had met obstacles which had so delayed him that he could not effect a junction in time to be of service.[1] As can well be understood, Forrest "was furious with rage" upon receipt of this dispatch. He evidently did not know that McCook had interposed between him and Chalmers, and, therefore, unjustly, but perhaps naturally enough,

[1] Wyeth's "Life of Forrest," p. 597.

accused the latter of lacking "the alacrity and swiftness which the emergency required and which had characterized him on other occasions." War is full of vicissitudes and Forrest was now in the midst of them. Confronted by a superior force, his own command was badly scattered, with the larger part of it hopelessly shut out of the impending battle. There was nothing left him but to curse and fight, and he did both with characteristic energy and desperation. He hoped to stay our progress till Chalmers could at least reach Plantersville, five miles to the rear. But McCook was in the way and all Forrest's efforts to unite his corps in my front were in vain. We still "had the bulge on him" and knew how to keep it. Long with his big division of mounted infantry and cavalry had not yet been seriously engaged, and, envious of Upton's successes the day before, he now rushed eagerly upon the enemy's thin line of skirmishers, from which it was evident he intended to make his principal fight behind his defenses.

It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon, and, discovering at a glance the real situation, Long strengthened the leading battalion of the Seventy-second Indiana Mounted Infantry with the rest of that splendid regiment dismounted. Armed with Spencer magazine rifles, they deployed in open order on the left of the road, and when the word reached them they rushed to the attack, pumping out a sheet of lead with each discharge which nothing could resist. They easily broke through and drove back the enemy's line, shortly after which Long finished the fighting on that part of the field by throwing Lieutenant Colonel Frank White with

the saber battalion of the Seventeenth Indiana Mounted Infantry headlong into the midst of the retreating Confederates. White himself was a berserker of the Norseman breed, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, long-limbed, over six feet tall, and "bearded like a pard." He would have been a full match for Forrest himself had they met, but that fate was reserved for a younger and slighter man, Captain Taylor, a mere stripling, but a braver one never rode to his death.

This brilliant charge was followed by a running fight in which both sides and every man displayed the highest valor. White, in the flower of his strength, was more than once completely surrounded by the enemy. But his life seemed to be charmed and he fought his way out with but little injury. Taylor, younger and more impulsive, was not so fortunate. Riding through the mêlée, he singled out Forrest, whom they all knew, and assailed him so fiercely with a shower of saber strokes aimed at his head and shoulders that for a moment it looked as though he would kill or capture the fleeing chieftain. So closely did the boy-captain follow him and so nearly were their horses matched in strength and speed, it was several moments before Forrest could open space enough to allow him to turn and shoot his pursuer from the saddle. Speaking of it a few days later, under a flag of truce with his arm still in a sling, he said reflectively: "If that boy had known enough to give me the point of his saber instead of its edge, I should not have been here to tell you about it."

Long himself was close to the fighting line, but before he could deploy the whole of his division to

support White, Alexander, on the road to the left, hearing the firing in front, pushed rapidly forward on Long's left till he also struck Forrest's line stretching through the woods with its fence rail lay-out and a slashing of trees further strengthened by two guns sweeping the road on which Upton was advancing. It was a well-chosen position, promising plenty of hard work for the assailants, but Upton with his entire division was soon abreast of Long. Both commanders knew their business perfectly, and with their men all on the field together, without delaying to reconnoiter the enemy's position, to count his numbers, or to ask for instructions, they threw forward a strong dismounted skirmish line, which at once became hotly engaged. In the midst of the rattle and racket Upton sent Alexander with two mounted regiments to charge from the left of his line and this was done just in the nick of time to catch the enemy in flank and drive him in confusion from the field. Long captured one gun; the impulse of his onset was so great that, striking the carriage in flank as it was withdrawing, he crushed it to the ground. Upton captured two others in his front. Forrest's whole line was overborne and driven from the field. So rapid was the charge that four hundred infantry and dismounted cavalry fell into our hands as prisoners of war.

The impetuosity of the Union cavalry was beautiful to behold. Its instinct for the flank had led it to the vital spot at the vital time, and it was now evident that nothing could stop its gallant onset. It had fairly turned Forrest's rules of war against himself, for, without disregarding tactics, it had not only "got the bulge on him," but "had got there

first with the most men." Forrest, again in full retreat, was taxed to the utmost to save his command and keep it together till darkness put an end to the pursuit.

It was a running fight for twenty-five miles, lasting till dark, and, although the victory was complete, the day's work was an exhausting one and both men and officers were glad to find rest and abundant food for themselves and their good steeds at the bivouac fires which blazed that night in great numbers around the little village of Plantersville, just twenty miles from Selma. The principal affair of the day was afterward known as the battle of Ebenezer Church, and this name was inscribed on the banners of every regiment of the two divisions. The little meeting-house for which it was called stood on the ridge near the scene of action. Every officer and soldier who participated in it was satisfied with himself and the part he had played. There were neither hesitation nor laggards on that day. Even the horses seemed carried away by "the noise of the captains and the shouting." The foraging parties brought in plenty of provisions that night and a more joyful bivouac was never made by hungry and tired soldiers. All were full of hope for the morrow. No command ever worked more harmoniously. The *élan* was perfect and the coöperation all that could be desired. Straggling was unknown from the time we left Nashville, and all seemed to understand that the true plan of action was a heavy dismounted skirmish line corresponding to the infantry line of battle, with a mounted force to charge the enemy's flanks and cut in upon his rear as opportunity offered. The weather was fine and the

landscape beginning to show the first approach of spring.

It was near this pretty planting village that Captain Hill, superintending his foragers, found himself on the lawn of a fine country house standing back from the highway. While directing one detachment to gather forage from the barns and another to get bacon from the smoke-house, and still another to catch chickens and collect eggs, he was astonished at a woman's voice calling out: "You, Ross Hill! How dare you rob my plantation! If you don't call your men from my smoke-house and stable-yard, I'll go up to Indiana and make your mother whip you within an inch of your life!" The hungry young cavalryman was face to face with a danger he had not thought of and, turning to meet it like a man, he recognized a handsome young woman who had resided in his native town just long enough before the war to get a divorce. Exactly what followed has not been told, but it is a safe inference that the impressments from that plantation were minimized as much as possible.

While food and forage were abundant and the camp fires that night were brilliant with blazing fence-rails, the situation was by no means devoid of anxiety. Forrest was still in front, and, although I hardly expected him to make another stand outside of his fortifications, I supposed that Chalmers, Jackson, and Buford were straining every nerve to unite their forces with his for a final stand at Selma. Although every step of the campaign had gone our way so far, I still lacked exact information as to the extent and character of the fortifications surrounding the city, the number and size of the guns

surmounting them, and the number of fighting men available for their defense.

The situation was a grave one, but good fortune was still with us. That afternoon or night an English civil engineer named Millington, who had been employed on the fortifications at Selma, gave himself up to Upton, and that enterprising officer at once set about finding out what he knew. It did not take long to learn that he was exactly the man we needed. He made no concealment of his knowledge, and at Upton's request prepared an accurate pencil sketch of the trace and profile of the works and of the topography in front and rear of them to scale, together with the number and position of the guns in place. This sketch is still in my possession.

Upton brought it, as well as the engineer, at once to my headquarters, and it took but a cursory examination to make certain that we were confronted by a problem of great difficulty and complexity and that the next day would be one of hard work and desperate fighting.

The sketch showed that the city of about eight thousand people was surrounded by a well-constructed, bastioned line of earthworks and stockades, extending in a semicircle of about three miles, from the river bank above to the river bank below the town, with an inner but incomplete line covering the principal roads from the city to the surrounding country. The site of Selma is a river terrace above overflow, rising gently to the northward, surrounded by cultivated land well commanded and swept by thirty-two guns in position behind heavy parapets completely covered by well-constructed stockades five and a half feet high, the stakes, from six to eight

inches thick, firmly planted in the ground and their tops sharpened. The sketch also showed the earthworks to be continuous except on the sections next to the river, where the line crossed short stretches of swamp or creek bottom, evidently considered impassable. Although these sections were also completely covered by the stockade, we hoped to find the right more or less undefended.

So far as I could see, nothing had been left undone to make the place impregnable. Its fortifications were adapted to either a small force or a large one, and, as no such works had ever been carried by cavalry, or for that matter by infantry either, where proper defense had been made, it was evident that we were confronted by a mighty serious problem.

Upton and I spent an anxious hour considering every possible aspect of the case. He had had unusual experience and success with infantry in just such work and from Marye's Heights to the Dead Angle at Spottsylvania had never failed to break through the entrenchments he had attacked. He was, therefore, my main dependence, but, as I wanted to lighten his task and divide the risk as much as possible, I concluded that he should approach the city by the left-hand road and make his principal attack farther to the left through the swamp, if possible, where the defense was likely to be the weakest, while Long's division, heavier by two regiments, was to follow the right-hand road, parallel with the other, to the main entrance of the city.

On Sunday, April 2, the reveillé was sounded before daybreak, horses, arms, and equipments had been well looked after and all arrangements had

been made for a rapid advance and a desperate fight. Everybody was ready and Long was on the road before sunrise, but had hardly got strung out before Upton was at his heels. All wagons, camp-followers, animals, and surplus impedimenta were left in the rear so as not to delay or interfere with the march of the fighting men. Mile after mile through a thickly settled country, dotted with houses and enclosures, and broken by corn and cotton fields, was covered without firing a single shot. The enemy was nowhere in sight, but this was not surprising, for Forrest, having been beaten in every encounter from Montevallo to Plantersville, had wisely made up his mind not to fight again till he had shelter and protection from the fortifications of Selma. It was clearly his duty and determination to defend that place at every cost, for it contained the principal gun factory, armory, machine shops and manufacturing establishments turning out military munitions for the Confederate Government. With those establishments destroyed and the Southern coast strictly blockaded it would necessarily be but a few months, probably but a few weeks, till the Confederacy must collapse and its armies fall to pieces for want of supplies. On the other hand, it was absolutely necessary that our movement against Selma should be successful. Failure to carry its defenses would be defeat for us and would bring the entire rebel force of that region together on our back.

There was not an officer that did not understand this. Upton was a veteran who needed no supervision and no incitement to the full performance of the task before him. Long was a good soldier, but had had no experience except with cavalry, and

up to the time he fell under my command had seen but little good military team work. His brigade commanders, Minty and Miller, with similar experience, were men of untiring energy, but had never engaged in such an enterprise as that now before them. Nothing was concealed from them, however. I rode all day, talking first with Long and then with Minty and Miller in turn. I showed them the Englishman's sketch, explaining every detail as to the cross-section of the works and their ditches, the stockades, the open ground, the small creeks or runs, the woods and the swamps outside, and pointed out every conceivable difficulty. Dwelling upon the results of failure and disaster, I emphasized the declaration that the works must be carried at no matter what cost. I directed my efforts especially to strengthening Miller's determination and confidence. Although his brigade of veteran infantry was regarded as more capable of such work than the cavalry, I pointed out they were up against a heavier contract than they had ever yet carried through. Miller was a serious and thoughtful man, sparing of words as well as of promises. When he thoroughly understood his task the most he would say was that he and his men would do their level best. No soldier ever more fully redeemed his modest promises than did Miller and his veterans. But nobody was forgotten on that long, bright day as our column hurried southward. Minty, the handsome, educated Irishman; Biggs, the stalwart farmer; Kitchell, the modest lawyer; Vail, the intrepid merchant, and Frank White, the modern berserker, as well as Alexander, Winslow, Noble, Garrard, Peters, Benteen, Young, and Eggleston, the splendid colo-

nels of Upton's division, all got a word of explanation and encouragement. Each in his own way promised and each made good to the letter. And in addition there was the Fourth Regular Cavalry, my own escort under the daring Lieutenants Davis, O'Connel, and Rendelbrook, every one of whom gave assurance of success. They had been burning bridges, stations, and cotton warehouses and tearing up railroads all day, but were as eager as fresh troops for the fray. It was a day of intense interest and anxiety to no subordinate more than to myself. While we had only nine thousand sabers, with two field batteries, every man was a veteran and knew that he was before the first objective of a great campaign involving the military considerations of the highest order. While no one could foresee the certainty of success, every officer fully realized its absolute necessity and promised his best effort to insure it.

As our column approached the city Long turned to the right and crossed over to the Summerfield road, while Upton continued down the direct road. Shortly after three o'clock we caught sight of the city from the higher land and immediately developed our line with the assaulting regiments and their supports dismounted and their led horses sent to cover in the rear. While this was going on I made a rapid reconnoissance with my staff to verify the English engineer's plan and, much to my gratification, found it to be surprisingly accurate. This made it easy to complete our dispositions for the attack, which I determined to make in accordance with the ideas developed by the plan and appearance of the entrenchments and the ground in front of them.

Satisfied that I was making no mistake, I directed Long to post a strong regiment at the creek to his right and rear to look out for Jackson and to protect the led horses and the pack train, and under this cover to form his dismounted line across the Summerfield road, with its right extending toward Mill Creek, the whole parallel to the entrenchments in front. This formation, concealed from the enemy by a low intervening ridge, consisted of only one thousand five hundred and fifty men and officers in the fighting line. They were in single rank, open order, with about one man to the yard, but as they were all veterans of the finest quality, armed with Spencer carbines or rifles, I regarded them as invincible. The rest of the division and the horse-holders were in close supporting distance.

Upton halted about a mile from the works behind a bit of woods, and, immediately dismounting, deployed Winslow's brigade in line, while he held Alexander's mounted, ready to move in any direction. Robinson's Chicago Board of Trade battery took position on the Summerfield road, while the regular battery formed front into action on the Plantersville road. Both held commanding positions within close range. It was evident, however, from the start that we were heavily outweighed in artillery and that the fight would have to be won as planned by a direct and dashing assault of the entrenchments by the dismounted men.

I decided after careful consideration that the attack should be made under cover of darkness by Long, while Upton, with three hundred picked men, should push through a thick growth of young trees and underbrush to his left and penetrate Bench

Creek Swamp for the purpose of assaulting the enemy's works where they were weakest. Although it was growing late, ample time was left for each division to reach the ground assigned it and to make its preparations with precision.

The signal for the advance was to be a single shot from Rodney's guns, but this arrangement was interfered with by a movement against our rear, which turned out to be an attack by a part of Chalmers's division against the regiment that Long had sent back to cover the pack train and led horses in rear. It was promptly reënforced by another regiment and, as the position was a good one for defense, Long rightly concluded that he could hold it till the battle in front should be won. McCook was not yet at hand and the situation was a grave one. Foreseeing that time was of the essence of the undertaking, Long, without even reporting that he had been attacked in rear, dashed to the front and ordered his dismounted line to advance. It was now just five o'clock. Assisted by both brigade commanders, with four field officers leading their respective regiments, he pushed his dismounted troopers straight at the rebel works six hundred yards to the front. They met at once a storm of shot and shell from fully twenty guns, sweeping the ground over which they were advancing. Armstrong's brigade, equal in numbers to themselves, poured a galling fire of musketry from the parapets as soon as they got within range. Not an officer or man halted or hesitated and, pumping out charge after charge from their deadly Spencers, the men soon reached the glacis, with Minty, Vail, and Kitchell leading, clambered over each other's shoulders like boys play-

ing leapfrog, surmounted the stockade, rushed down into the ditch, and scrambled up the escarpment, through the embrasures, and over the parapet into the works. The enemy met them bravely in a sharp hand-to-hand fight and Forrest always claimed that Armstrong had enough men to repel the attack, but the courage and impulse of the Union soldiers were irresistible and soon gave them a complete victory. In less time that it takes to tell it, four officers and thirty-eight men were killed, while two hundred and seventy were wounded. Long himself was stricken down within a few yards of the enemy's works by a bullet which ploughed through his scalp. Colonel Dobb of the Fourth Ohio was killed, while the invincible Miller, with Colonel McCormick and Lieutenant Colonel Biggs, were also knocked out, but nothing daunted or delayed the rush of that gallant line in blue.

Upton, hearing the noise of battle to his right, punctuated as it was by the rattle and roar of the opposing artillery, waited for neither signal nor orders, but made his way through the brush, across the swamp, carrying the works in his front with a rush and but trifling loss. Thus the entire outer line of the defenses was captured with no other orders than those I had given by way of preparation.

Hearing the fusillade and roar of artillery and realizing that the fight was indeed on for better or for worse, I galloped at once to the left of Long's charging line, and, pausing only long enough to learn what had precipitated the action, I sent a staff officer to Upton with directions to carry out the orders previously given him, to push across the swamp, break through the stockade, and turn the

enemy's right. But before the officer reached him Upton, with true military instinct, was under full headway, doing his part and gaining his share of the victory. The whole plain for a mile and a half was covered at once with a whirlwind of battle. Without waiting for the result, I promptly dismounted the horse I had been riding all day, sprang onto my splendid gray gelding, "Sheridan," and, turning to the Fourth Regulars, bade them follow at the charge. Regarding it as one of those emergencies which occur but once in a soldier's life and realizing that I had not another man to put in, I felt it my duty to show myself on my most conspicuous horse with staff, escort, and red battle-flag in the thickest of the fight. Not a man faltered. Straight down the turnpike, through the first line of works we rode all together, every man with saber drawn and nerves strained to the utmost, as though his personal example was essential to victory, and while Long, to the right, swept over stockade, ditch, and parapet, driving Forrest and Armstrong from their outer entrenchments back upon the inner line, I found myself abreast of our dismounted men, close enough to the enemy's second line of entrenchments to hear an officer call out: "Shoot that man on the white horse." My horse fell instantly with a bullet in the breast. As he sank to the ground I threw myself from the saddle, but had hardly touched the ground before he was on his feet with his head high in the air and his eyes blazing as though they were balls of fire. As there was only a trickle of blood from his breast and no other horse within reach, I remounted and loudly sounded the rally. Incredible as it may seem, I rode the wounded horse till

eleven that night. He showed neither pain nor fatigue, but his wound was a mortal one. Two weeks later he was wounded again through the neck by a stray bullet in the dark inside the Chattahoochee bridge, at Columbus, and died a week later at Macon.

My escort was badly scattered in the charge, but, responding to the stirring calls of my Indian bugler, it reformed at once and followed me at a rattling pace through the entrenchments at the highway. As the ground was clear of obstructions from that point, I sent the regiment again headlong after the enemy and had the satisfaction of seeing it disappear in the mass of broken and fleeing Confederates, when I halted and sent word to Minty, who had succeeded Long in command of the Second Division, to press his advantage for all that was in sight. Upton was doing his work well from the Range Line road around to the left, sweeping everything before him. He also broke through the inner line, putting the enemy after a headlong charge again to flight. Orders were sent to press his advantage, but upon such an occasion and to such a man orders were hardly necessary. Withal he followed the retreating enemy on the Burnsville road back into the country, far into the night, capturing four guns and many prisoners.

Rodney and Robinson, with their field rifles, pounded away from their advantageous positions till the first line was carried, when they limbered up and galloped into new positions almost muzzle to muzzle with the enemy's guns on the inner entrenchments. From their last position they poured a storm of canister and shrapnel into the retreating enemy, thus adding to the rout and excitement,

which now threw the suburbs of the city into wild confusion and terror.

Our victory was complete, but night settled down before the fighting ended or the dismounted troopers could reassemble and remount their horses from the rear. The only mounted men that actually got into the mêlée were the Fourth Regulars, who were always kept at hand for such purposes. Most of the Confederates left their horses behind to the victors for the simple reason that they were so pressed from first to last they could neither reach nor remount them.

Forrest, Buford, Armstrong, and Adams exerted themselves as they never did before to stem the tide of defeat, but all their efforts were futile. Darkness having fallen upon them as well as upon us, it was impossible to rally or reform their men or to do anything effective to bring order out of chaos. Knowing the streets and open places better than it was possible for us, they knew what direction to take to escape from the city. The first three made their way by the Burnsville road to the eastward out of the fortifications and into the open country before Upton's men discovered their route or could go in pursuit. Dan Adams, it is said, took to the Alabama River and succeeded in reaching the other side, but whether by boat or by swimming is not known. Many men followed and were drowned in their efforts to escape.

Before the attack began, but after we had made our appearance in front of the town, Lieutenant General Dick Taylor, the department commander, seeing that the defense could hardly be made good, escaped to the west by the last railway train that

left the city before our men cut off communication with the country beyond.

As soon as the city was in our possession, all organized resistance ceased, but desultory street fighting continued till the remnants of the Confederate force were picked up or had made their escape. But this did not end the confusion and racket. On the contrary, it seemed to increase them. The inexorable Forrest had forced every male strong enough to pull a trigger, including judges, lawyers, preachers, doctors, and government employees, old and young alike, to the number of two thousand or more, into the defenses. Not one was excused. It was "fight or swim; into the works or into the river," for everybody, and, according to all accounts, Forrest did not care much which. But when the break came it was every man for himself. Many were captured, and those that were not sought concealment in the houses of the town.

It was now pitch dark and, as though this had been the chance they were waiting for, the negroes broke loose and began to plunder the shops and stores. Pandemonium followed, and before our provost guard could get control fires were raging at several places, and, as the firemen had been called out to fight, it looked as though the town would be destroyed by the fires. None of my people knew where the fire engines were or how to get them at work, and, although my staff, with the assistance of the leading officers, did all they could to restore order and prevent the fires from spreading, it was nearly midnight before they got the situation completely under control. Some of the marauders and desperadoes who always find place in modern armies

doubtless took part in plundering the stores and occasionally in breaking into private houses, but all such work was ruthlessly and promptly stopped as soon as it became known.

Naturally, I gave personal attention to restoring order and finding the Confederate arsenal, gun shops, foundries, factories, and storehouses, and to putting them under military guard. Most of them on the river front, covering some twenty acres, were easily found and protected. Of course, they were from the first doomed to destruction. Indeed, that was the principal object of our expedition, but they were spared for several days. They were finally fired on a dark night in the midst of a heavy rainstorm, but not till all the machinery had been disabled and all the stores, ammunition, shot, and shell had been tumbled into the river. This work, with the construction of the necessary troughs and runways, was placed under Winslow's supervision, who, in addition to commanding the city, was charged with destroying whatever it contained belonging to the Confederate Government. The final act of the drama was most impressive. The buildings, mostly of dry pine, when ignited from the inside burned like tinder. The rain, which shortly came down in torrents, and the impenetrable clouds which overspread the skies added to the grandeur of the scene and at the same time made it possible to confine the fire strictly to the property destined for destruction. Every point in the neighborhood was watched with vigilance to see that not a dollar's worth of private property was injured in the conflagration which closed the scene.

At eleven o'clock on the night of capture, after

restoring order and assuring myself that every organization under its own officers was safely assembled in bivouac, I established headquarters at the Gee House, the leading hotel of the place, turned my poor wounded gray over to the veterinary and prepared myself for the rest we had all so fully earned. Selma was ours and fairly won, but it was not till well into the next day that we realized the full extent and value of our victory.

Sunday, April 2, 1865, was the greatest day in the history of the Cavalry Corps M. D. M., for on that day it had not only captured the most complete set of fortifications in the South, covering the most important Confederate depots of manufacture and supply, but it had by the same act planted itself firmly across the central line of railway connecting Richmond with the southwestern states. It had practically turned the Confederacy's left flank, captured its last and most valuable stronghold, put itself in position to occupy and roll up its last line of interior defense and communication, and finally made it certain that the cavalry army which had done these things could in a month more join Sherman and Grant in Virginia. But it was not till three weeks later that we knew Richmond, at the other end of the line, had fallen on the same day with Selma, and that these simultaneous events were practically the end of the War for the Union.

With nine thousand cavalry actually at hand and three thousand more in supporting distance, but less than half the number actually engaged, a single line of one thousand five hundred and fifty dismounted officers and men, led by Long, Minty, and Miller, and four regimental commanders, aided

by Upton, Winslow, and Alexander, farther to the left, had broken through and swept over a strongly constructed, double-bastioned line, covered by a continuous stockade, with a deep ditch containing mud and water at places, mounting thirty-two cannon of various calibers, and holding, according to the best account we could get, from five to six thousand men, cavalry, artillery, infantry, and militia. It is certain that Armstrong's veteran brigade, estimated at not less than one thousand five hundred men, held the entrenchments in front of Long and ought to have repelled the force of equal size which carried them. Be this as it may, the victory, no matter how gained or what the odds, was an unheard-of one for cavalry, and the results and incidents which followed during the month of April made it absolutely impossible for the Confederate Government to continue the war after Lee's surrender at Appomattox eight days later.[1]

The enemy's killed and wounded in the campaign ending at Selma were never reported, but probably were somewhat less than ours, while their loss of property and munitions was not only great, but irreparable. We captured two thousand seven hundred prisoners, with one hundred and fifty officers, two thousand cavalry and artillery horses, thirty-two guns in position on the defenses, besides forty-four siege and seacoast guns and twenty-six field guns, with their carriages and caissons, in the arsenal and foundries, sixty-six thousand rounds of

[1] For a detailed account of the Selma Campaign with particulars as to Forrest's command, see Scott's admirable work, "The Story of a Cavalry Regiment," G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1893, pp. 410-463; also Official Records, Serial Number 103, Wilson's Raid, Alabama and Georgia, pp. 339-504.

artillery ammunition, large quantities of cartridges ready for issue, and fourteen thousand pounds of gunpowder. The Selma arsenal, consisting of twenty-four buildings filled with machinery and munitions of war, the great foundry for casting naval and military guns, with its machinery and tools, three full iron plants in operation, many large shops and factories making machinery, tools, and equipments, the central powder and niter works, two magazines, with seven buildings connected therewith, besides many storehouses filled with quartermaster's and commissary's supplies, were burned a few days later. The blow was an overwhelming one to the Confederacy and of corresponding advantage to the Union national cause.

The sudden end of the war necessarily rendered it impossible for the Confederate leaders to make or send in detailed reports of the final campaign through Alabama and Georgia. For a decade or more the Confederate sympathizers and historians either ignored it entirely or did what they could to minimize its effects, but Lieutenant General Richard Taylor, the supreme Confederate commander in that theater of operations, after all was over wrote as follows:

> I have never met this General Wilson, whose soldierly qualities are entitled to respect; for of all the Federal expeditions of which I have any knowledge, his was the best conducted.[1]

This is high praise, but we may well be pardoned for leaving it at that.

[1] "Destruction and Reconstruction," p. 220.

## VII

### LAST CAMPAIGN OF THE WAR

Message to Canby—Meeting with Forrest—Campaign against Montgomery, West Point, and Columbus—Colored regiments—Capture of rebel supply boats by Major Weston.

I was up and at work at an early hour on April 3. Although Selma was firmly in our possession, it was necessary to make our position secure and the first measure to that end was to draw in our detachments and trains and send out scouts to ascertain the enemy's position and movements. We were entirely ignorant of what was taking place in Virginia, or in Mississippi and Alabama. While my campaign had been primarily intended as a demonstration in favor of Canby's operations against Mobile, its success had made it certain that Canby with his overwhelming force would also succeed. I, therefore, sent Upton out for McCook, whom he found at Plantersville, to bring in the pontoon train, the wagons, and the dismounted men, and this he did without delay or loss. The whole command, except Croxton's brigade, was reunited and refitted as far as the resources we had captured would permit. All our dismounted troopers and servants were mounted on captured horses, and after all swapping and ex-

changing were finished there was a surplus of about five hundred horses and many mules. Fearing that these might fall into the enemy's hands when we left, I ordered them shot and thrown into the Alabama River, which was done. The measure seemed cruel, but in war it is frequently necessary to do such things for self-protection as well as for the injury of the enemy.

We had no means of knowing that the Rebellion was so near its end. We were in the heart of the enemy's country, cut off from all communication with the North and with the Government. The telegraph lines were broken or in hostile hands, the trains were stopped, the newspapers and mail were suspended, and the people sullen and dismayed. Our only source of information were the "grapevine telegraph" and the negroes. While the latter were unreliable, but willing, they knew but little. We had no white friends to declare themselves, and were, therefore, thrown entirely on our own resources and judgment.

Feeling sure that Mobile would necessarily follow Selma, I regarded it of the first importance to acquaint Canby with our success and our future course, but the intervening country, including the Alabama valley, was entirely in the hands of the enemy. The distance from Selma to Mobile is one hundred and fifty miles as the crow flies, by the river at least twice that distance, and, while it is now certain a squadron of cavalry could have ridden through that region safely and rapidly, I concluded it best to send a negro by skiff with the current of the great river to carry him forward both day and night. After some search I found a middle-aged

black man named Charles Marven, sensible, trustworthy, and well acquainted with the river, who was willing to carry my dispatch to Canby, which I wrote on tissue paper, to be concealed in his clothing, but I took the precaution of explaining its contents fully to my dignified and silent messenger. As though proud of his trust, he received it with becoming gravity and solemnly assured me he would deliver it in person to Canby within five days unless killed on the way. It is pleasant to record that he started on the 4th and without resting night or day reached his destination and delivered his message safely into Canby's hands. In compliance with my request, the General gave him two hundred dollars for his valuable service, and, after celebrating our victory at Selma with a salute of a hundred guns, which the enemy were slow to understand, he proceeded with confidence and deliberation to enforce the surrender of Mobile and the strong places he had been confronting for several weeks as a necessary preliminary to his pushing into the interior as I advised. He knew as well as I did that the war was over in Alabama and that our true line thenceforth was to the eastward. The enemy to the westward was soon advised through Taylor that Selma had fallen, and this was followed by the assault and capture of the Spanish Fort and Blakely, and the surrender of Mobile. Of course, I was ignorant of these events till several weeks afterward, but, feeling assured that they would occur sooner or later, my campaign to Montgomery and eastward was fully justified.

Forrest, in escaping from Selma, rode rapidly around the city to the westward under the cover

of darkness. On the way his escort fell upon an outlying detachment of the Fourth Cavalry at a farmhouse and killed the last one of them, including Lieutenant Roys in command. Such incidents as this were far too frequent with Forrest. He appears to have had a ruthless temper which impelled him upon every occasion where he had a clear advantage to push his success to a bloody end, and yet he always seemed not only to resent but to have a plausible excuse for the cruel excesses which were charged against him.

After calling in my detachments and decreasing my impedimenta, I directed my engineer, Lieutenant Heywood of the Fourth Michigan, to gather materials for the construction of wooden pontoons or batteaux with which to piece out our bridge train, and to lay a bridge across the Alabama, which at that place is eight hundred and fifty feet wide and very deep, with a strong current toward the Gulf of Mexico. Heywood and Hubbard were vigorous and resourceful men, and, while they found but little lumber ready, they fitted up a disabled sawmill and cut the saw logs by hand into lumber of proper sizes for use. With the assistance of the Michigan men, many of whom were lumbermen, they made rapid progress, and, although nails, spikes, and cordage were extremely scarce, they had a floating bridge spanning the river by the night of April 7, or within four working days.

Meanwhile, I was anxious to know what had become of Croxton, who had neither come in nor reported his whereabouts. As we were encumbered with several thousand prisoners, many of them citizens who had been forced into the defenses of Selma,

it occurred to me that I might arrange an exchange with Forrest, whom I knew to be still in the vicinity, west of the Cahawba. While I had lost relatively few men, a sufficient number was missing to justify an effort at their recovery. As Forrest was in much worse condition, we arranged by correspondence and couriers to meet under a flag of truce for the purpose of discussing an exchange of prisoners and such other matters as might interest us. Accordingly, I started to Cahawba, nine or ten miles from Selma, on the morning of the 7th, but, finding the streams much swollen and the bridges broken or swept away, I reluctantly gave up the trip and returned to the city for the night. Early next morning I started out again and by ten o'clock reached the hospitable mansion of Colonel Matthews in the town of Cahawba. I found a gentleman of great intelligence and high character and, although a slaveholder and a rich planter, he had never given up his allegiance to the Union. He received me and my two aids with true Southern hospitality and, although he expressed surprise at my youth and modest suite, he at once made me understand that I was a most welcome guest.

Forrest arrived at 1 P. M., and as soon as our greetings, which were made with some reserve on his part, were over, we were summoned to a bountiful Southern dinner. With good cheer the formalities were relaxed and all embarrassment disappeared, so that by the time the meal was over we were treating each other like old acquaintances, if not old friends. Left to ourselves, Forrest and I withdrew to the parlor, where we had a long but guarded conversation covering recent events and

their possible consequences. It was easy to see, however, that he was depressed. He carried his left arm in a sling and moved with cautious deliberation. He appeared to be in the full maturity of his powers. Born in 1821, he was forty-four years of age and in excellent condition, though, like myself, lean in flesh and hard of muscle. With cold, steel-blue eyes, regular features, full brown hair and a commanding figure, I found him neither so tall nor so masterful in appearance as I expected. His biographers tell us he was over six feet tall. Before seeing him I thought of him fully up to that stature, with the erect figure and martial bearing of the typical Southern cavalier, but I frankly confess I was somewhat disappointed. I found him loosely put together, if not somewhat stooping and slouchy in appearance, and he appeared rather under than over six feet. His frame was large and his body full, and I guessed his weight at one hundred and seventy-five pounds. His countenance was serious, his conduct diffident, but self-possessed, and his bearing free from military affectations. It took but a glance to discover that life and its duties were all-important to him, and that whatever engaged his attention would receive most careful consideration. He was well clad, and as he rode up it was evident that he was admirably mounted. His general appearance indicated great firmness, excellent judgment, and inflexible will. I came to know him well, if not intimately, after the war, when we were both engaged in building railroads. I found him in civil life a modest, unassuming, and trustworthy man of affairs. What he thought of me I never knew, except that he always treated me with due respect and consideration.

I was about sixteen years his junior, somewhat shorter, and of lighter build, and, judging from his first remarks at the Cahawba meeting, he was quite as curious about me as I was about him. We had hardly shaken hands and taken our seats when, looking me steadily in the face, he said:

"Well, General, you have beaten me badly, and for the first time I am compelled to make such an acknowledgment. I have met many of your men, but never before one I did not get away with, first or last."

I replied at once: "Our victory was not without cost. You put up a stout fight, but we were too many and too fast for you."

To this he rejoined: "Yes, I did my best, but, if I now had your entire force in hand, it would not compensate us for the deadly blow you have inflicted upon our cause by the capture and destruction of our great arsenal, foundries, workshops, and storehouses at Selma."

The conversation then turned to details, during which he did not hesitate to say that Armstrong, holding that section of the works carried by Long with about as many men behind the entrenchments as came against them, ought to have repelled the attack instead of yielding to it. In this connection he confessed that our movements were too rapid for him, and that, although he had pressed every townsman from the oldest down to the schoolboys into the works and ought to have made good, we had got the start of him from the first and, in spite of all he could do, had carried everything before us. While making no effort to conceal his surprise nor to hide his chagrin, he closed his lips rigidly

with reference to all other operations and said absolutely nothing as to the future course of the war, either in our own theater or elsewhere in the Confederacy.

When I suggested an exchange of prisoners he pleaded lack of authority, but offered to communicate with those above him and give me their views later. Whether he discovered that I did not regard the matter as of serious concern, I never knew, but in the conversation which followed he made it clear, perhaps inadvertently, that he had captured but few of Croxton's men, that Croxton, after operating about Trion and Tuscaloosa, had gone well down toward Meridian, and, finally, that he was still at large, going practically where he pleased. As this was precisely what I wanted to know, and, indeed, had gone out to learn, I brought the conference to a close with the remark that it was getting late and I must return to Selma.

On taking leave I said with sincere sympathy: "General, I notice that you are carrying your arm in a sling. I hope you are not badly hurt." Whereupon he replied: "Oh no, merely somewhat severely bruised. A young captain of yours singled me out at Ebenezer Church and rained such a shower of saber strokes on my head and shoulders that I thought he would kill me. While warding them off with my arm I feared that he would give me the point of his saber instead of its edge, and, had he known enough to do that, I should not have been here to tell you about it."

This incident may now be dismissed with the remark that I cautioned Forrest to be more careful hereafter, as many of our men knew him by sight

and would naturally regard it as a great feat of arms to kill him in battle. Without the slightest appearance of emotion he answered: "I am much obliged to you, General, but I have no fear! I have faced death on a hundred fields and I am sure the bullet has not been cast which is to kill me."

Having satisfied myself that Croxton was safe and still coöperating with me, I galloped back to Selma, resolved and ready to cross the river and continue my operations, first against Montgomery, and afterward onward to Columbus, West Point, and central Georgia. Our floating bridge, eight hundred and fifty feet long, composed of thirty canvas and six wooden pontoons, with three large barges for the shore ends, was now in position and ready for use. It was firmly anchored by heavy pieces of machinery, but the river was rising rapidly and was full of drifting trees, which made it difficult to keep the bridge in position. While under construction it had been broken more than once, but early the next day the crossing began and continued with occasional intermissions till the entire command was safely south of the river. The passage was characterized by several exciting incidents. The work of protecting the bridge was difficult in the extreme, but by the use of skiffs the floating trees were guided either to the shore above and fastened there or through the openings of the bridge. In supervising this work General Alexander was particularly active, but while warding off a heavy log the current dashed him against one of the anchor lines, overturned his boat, and threw his crew into the river. Fortunately, he caught the bow of a pontoon as he came up and was drawing himself over the gunwale when

the log caught him between it and the pontoon, broke three ribs and came near crushing his life out of him, but happily the pontoniers succeeded in rescuing and lifting him onto the bridge without further injury.

The march of our column by twos across the bridge continued night and day till completed. Owing to the great depth and rapidity of the current, the anchor lines pulled the bows of the boats so deep that they occasionally took water, and in one instance a section of the bridge was torn from the structure. The boats were so short that it was difficult to keep the moving column close enough to the downstream side to keep the bridge stable. The passage was, therefore, slow, but continued without halt throughout the night till finished. This made it necessary to light up the scene by the blaze of burning frame buildings, several of which near the bank were set on fire for that purpose. The scene was a romantic and brilliant one, long to be remembered.

The rear guard, composed of the Fourth Iowa Cavalry, by midnight of the 9th had safely crossed the river and gone into bivouac half a mile south of the bridge. Winslow, commanding the city, having satisfied himself that the entire command and all its impedimenta were safely over, remained in the town with his aids, orderlies, and a few troopers till the morning of the 10th. Having personally superintended the establishment of a hospital, in which about eighty of our wounded were left behind in charge of our own surgeons, with instructions to treat both Confederates and Union men alike, he withdrew, instructing the pontoniers to dismantle the bridge. All the new batteaux and

half of the canvas boats were then destroyed so that the bridge train, thus lightened, could easily keep up with the rapidly moving column. It had laid three bridges before reaching Selma, and, as the rivers east of that place were either narrow or spanned by permanent bridges, it was confidently believed we should be able to cross them without material delay or difficulty.

While the corps greatly profited by the week's rest at Selma, it devoted all the time necessary while there to looking after harness and equipment and to shoeing horses and mules. Wagons, pontoon train, and pack animals had been reduced to the lowest limit, and, as will be seen, camp followers were rigidly cut off. But a great number of fugitives from the surrounding country flocked into the town and our march to the eastward had hardly begun when it became apparent that new crowds were following us, which made vigorous measures necessary for getting rid of them. The rear guard could keep them behind, but could not prevent them from taking the road to freedom. The first day out I became deeply impressed with the necessity of turning the multitude to some useful purpose. Accordingly, I concluded to organize the able-bodied men of military age into regiments, one to each division, and to ruthlessly shut off the old men, women, and children.

As Forrest was not willing to exchange prisoners, I adopted the plan of marching those captured at Selma through the country, and as they gave out to parole and allow them to straggle back to Selma or to their homes as best they could. This also delayed our rear guard somewhat, but the plan worked

well, as it gave every white man who fell into our hands a severe lesson as to what might happen to men captured in arms against their country.

As the surgeons examined and selected the able-bodied negroes I detailed the necessary line officers for the preliminary organization of companies and regiments. This done, we mounted the men on such horses and mules as we could pick up in the country. The most rigid discipline was established, and from that time we incurred no delay or inconvenience to the marching column. No matter what distance the white troops covered, the negroes always got into camp at a reasonable hour the same night. Upon one occasion many of them marched forty miles on foot without stopping. This shows that they were in fine condition for military life.

I am glad to add that this organization constituted the only instance of the kind that came to my knowledge during the war. The results were satisfactory and, although hostilities were practically at an end, the organization and equipment of the regiments were approved and they were duly mustered into the army later, under the authority of the War Department. Commanded by such men as Benteen, Root, and Archer, they could not fail to reach an excellent state of discipline and efficiency. During our march to the eastward a number were also used as teamsters, train guards, and road makers, in all of which work they soon became experts, and found their highest utility.

Our march from Selma lay nearly due east through the planting villages of Benton, Churchill, and Lowndesborough. Little opposition was encountered, although Clanton's brigade of Buford's divi-

sion preceded us, keeping careful watch of our movements. Slight skirmishing took place at the bridges and other positions favorable for defense, but our column, covered by strong and rapidly moving advance guards, was nowhere materially delayed. Swamps and creeks alternating with rolling uplands varied the scene from hour to hour. We were at last within the richest planting district of the South and found it, not only untouched by war, but abounding in forage and provisions of every sort. The roads, bordered by hedges of Cherokee roses, were redolent with spring perfumes. The march was, therefore, not only rapid, but delightful and cheering.

The facility with which the negroes were organized, armed, and equipped and the service they rendered made it certain that Hatch's division could easily have been furnished at Selma and on the march with horses and everything else essential to its efficiency. When this came to me in all its force I could not help wishing that I had brought Hatch with me. His presence would have provided against every possible contingency and would have given me such a preponderance of force as to make victory certain even if Forrest had succeeded in confronting me with all the Confederate cavalry in the Southwest. The lesson taught by this incident should not be lost sight of by military men hereafter.

Although the Confederates made but little show as we approached Montgomery on the morning of April 12, there was nothing visible to indicate the peaceful surrender of the place. As the first capital of the Confederacy and the strategic and commercial center of a wide region, we naturally supposed it

had been fully fortified and would be stoutly defended. While I knew that neither Taylor nor Forrest was there, I supposed that some other general would necessarily gather a strong force within its works and that we should have a sharp fight for their possession. But as it turned out the local authorities decided that, as no effective defense could be made, their only alternative was to place the city and themselves under my protection. For this purpose the mayor and several of the principal citizens rode out with a flag of truce and surrendered their charge into my hands without terms or conditions. This made it necessary to halt, close up the column, and take measures for raising the national flag over the first Confederate capitol. During this halt officers were told off to guard the public stores, to maintain order, and to prevent straggling and marauding. Finally every known precaution was resorted to for the purpose of impressing the people with the discipline, strength, and invincibility of the forces under my command.

Naturally both officers and men were at once notified that the city had surrendered and that there would be no fight. It is but the truth to add that they were disappointed. They had not thought it possible that Montgomery, after having given such proud defiance at the outbreak of the Rebellion to the national unity and power, would surrender without even a show of resistance. But when they became convinced that such was the case, they consoled themselves with making the best possible preparations for a triumphal march through the principal streets to their designated camp beyond. Having sent the Fourth Cavalry forward as provost guard,

the entry was made with all the decorum and ceremony possible to a fighting force in the heart of a hostile country.

With perfect order in column of platoons, every man in his place, division and brigade flags unfurled, guidons flying, sabers and spurs jingling, bands playing patriotic airs, and the bugles now and then sounding the calls, the war-begrimed Union troopers, batteries, ambulances, and wagons passed proudly through the city. Not a man left the ranks, not a loud word was uttered, and not an incident happened to hurt the feelings of the misguided people. It was an example of discipline, order, and power lasting nearly all day and constituting a far more impressive spectacle than a bloody battle would have been. Five brigades, not far from twelve thousand troopers, were in that column passing in review, as it were, before the ladies and gentlemen of the city. Many witnessed it from the windows, doorsteps, and sidewalks with silent respect, which showed clearly that the great Rebellion was at an end. The Union flag, which we promptly hoisted over the State House, was recognized by all as the emblem of national authority, and as regiment after regiment passed onward beneath the shadow of its starry folds, they made the city ring with their exultant salute, and this must have impressed all with the conviction that the Union had been reëstablished, and that peace was near at hand. It was a great day for the Cavalry Corps, every man of which seemed to understand and to act upon the understanding that the city, having surrendered without a fight, belonged to the commanding general, and that every soldier was in honor bound not only to

respect his truce, but to show the highest discipline of which he was capable. It was an impressive sight long to be remembered by both citizens and soldiers.

Having on my arrival accepted the hospitality of Colonel Powell, a leading citizen, I dismounted, my headquarters at his handsome house. He and his family were people of education and refinement, who knew how to be polite even to unwelcome guests. They had seen no Union soldiers except prisoners of war, but, fearing that those in arms with me would be violent and predatory, the colonel had, as a precautionary measure, emptied his wine-cellar and broken the bottles on the curbstone. Many of his neighbors had followed his example, and when I got there the gutters were red with running wine. But when it was seen that not a trooper left his place in the ranks, that there were neither marauders nor drunken men, and that perfect order prevailed, a feeling of silent awe seemed to spread to the features of those worthy people. More than one lady expressed her surprise and gratification at the perfect behavior of our men, while all concerned declared their regret at the waste of wines and liquors which had been poured into the gutters to make certain that the Yankee troopers should have no opportunity for drunkenness.

Here, as at Selma, while protecting private property, we burned such foundries and factories as might be used in aid of the expiring rebellion. The Confederate authorities, while making no resistance, had burned eighty-five thousand bales of cotton and loaded their military supplies on a fleet of steamboats, which they sent to the Tuckabatachee bend of the Coosa River, some twelve or fifteen miles

above the city, near Wetumka. But as soon as this was reported I sent a detachment of the Fourth Kentucky Cavalry under the command of Major, afterward Major General, John F. Weston to capture and bring in the fleet. This service was performed in a manner that well illustrates the hardihood and enterprise of the western cavalrymen. As the boats were found under guard, tied up to the opposite shore, it seemed at first glance hardly possible to reach them, but, nothing daunted, the young and gallant major, with a non-commissioned officer and two privates, pulled off their clothes and swam the river behind a floating log at the bend above for a couple of skiffs, with which they came back, and ferried the rest of their men to the other shore. While engaged in this operation a detachment of the Fourth Iowa Cavalry came to the crossing and offered their support, but this was declined, and, although the Iowa men remained near at hand, they took no other part in the enterprise. The Kentuckians alone captured the steamboats, got up steam, took their horses aboard, and brought the fleet to Montgomery that night. After taking such of the supplies as were required for our troops the boats and cargoes were burned to the water's edge, making a brilliant bonfire for the multitude which lined the shore.

Years afterward, at my request and on my recommendation, the Congressional medal of honor was bestowed upon Weston for his gallantry and enterprise in this unusual affair.

At Montgomery the local newspapers published what appeared to be a truthful statement that Lee had abandoned the defenses of Petersburg and re-

treated to the interior, closely followed by Grant, while Davis and his cabinet had fled from Richmond and reëstablished their Government, first at Danbury and afterward at Saulsbury, North Carolina. While these reports seemed to be entirely credible, I could get no detailed confirmation of them. No one would admit that he knew positively what had taken place in Virginia, and not a word reached me indicating that Lee had surrendered.

It is possible that no official report of what had happened in front of Petersburg had been sent out or permitted to reach central Alabama. At all events, I got no trustworthy details till the night I entered Macon a week later. The air was full of rumors, but I could find no one to confirm or vouch for them. The most that I could consider certain was that Richmond had been abandoned by both the Government and the army, and that conclusive events might follow at an early day. This convinced me that my command was operating in exactly the right line to produce the greatest effect in the final windup of the great drama.

The situation as I still saw it made it my duty to continue "breaking things" along the main line of Confederate communications through central Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas. I, therefore, spent but a single night in Montgomery, pushing my advanced brigade under LaGrange without halt or delay in pursuit of Buford, whom he overtook at nightfall twelve miles to the east. Without halt or delay LaGrange charged boldly into Buford's line, capturing his battle flag with forty or fifty prisoners, and driving him in confusion from the field.

Having taken the precaution of sending another courier from Montgomery to inform Canby of our continued success, I pushed on to the Cubahatchee, some twenty miles to the eastward, on the 14th. With detachments scouting the country, front, flank, and rear, the column reached Tuskegee about noon the next day. Situated in the heart of a planting country, this town was, even at that day, a beautiful one of three thousand five hundred or four thousand inhabitants, and has since been made famous by Booker Washington and the Tuskegee Institute for the education of negroes. It was the seat of education and refinement for an extensive region, and contained several private schools and seminaries for both girls and boys, which contributed much to its importance. Here, as at Montgomery, the mayor and leading citizens met our advance guard and surrendered at discretion, begging only protection for person and property. I promptly granted their request and told off the trusty Fourth Cavalry again to guard the town and maintain order. Detachments were sent to the principal schools, videttes were posted at the street corners, and all the usual precautions were taken, not only to prevent straggling and marauding, but to impress the people with the good behavior and discipline of the Northern cavalrymen. As was now the rule, corps, division, and brigade flags, regimental colors, and company guidons were unfurled, the bands played patriotic airs to the accompaniment of clanking saber and jingling spur as brigade after brigade and regiment after regiment, followed by the artillery and trains, passed on to the eastward. Not an officer or man left the ranks, but all bore themselves as proudly as if they

were on parade. With colors, staff, and escort I made my headquarters at the best hotel for five hours, while the mayor, the leading citizens, and the principals of the seminaries called to pay their respects. They were at first naturally timid and backward, but when they saw the perfect order and decorum which prevailed they gained confidence and expressed both their gratification and surprise and then their admiration and awe.

One of the first callers was a dignified and serious woman, who said that a detachment of men under the direction of an officer were threatening to destroy her printing press and type because, as the officer alleged, they were used in the publication of a rebel newspaper. She asked me politely if this was in accordance with my orders.

I replied at once that it was, as our policy and practice were to break up all the rebel newspapers we could find or overtake.

At this she lost her temper, declaring that she had expected nothing better. She had never believed that Yankees could be as liberal or enlightened as they pretended to be. She had always doubted their sincerity, and, now that they were destroying the only means the country had of printing Bibles and schoolbooks, she was sure they were the enemies of religion and education, as well as of the industries and political rights of the South.

When she paused I replied: "But, Madam, you said nothing at first about printing Bibles and schoolbooks, and you frankly admit that you have been publishing a rebel newspaper. Thereupon I told you quite as frankly that we were destroying such presses as we could find engaged in that work.

If, however, you will give me a bond for $5,000, with the Mayor and two of your principal citizens as surety, that you will print nothing inimical to the Union or to the Constitution, but will confine your press hereafter exclusively to the publication of Bibles and schoolbooks, I shall order my provost marshal to suspend the destruction and give you a safeguard for your printing office."

Although evidently surprised at this turn in the affair, she promptly accepted my offer and hurried off to find her sureties, while I dispatched an aid to see that no harm was done for the present. I then sent for Colonel Noble, already noted as a rising lawyer, and many years afterward greatly distinguished as secretary of the interior in Harrison's cabinet, and, after explaining the case, directed him to draw up a bond to cover the agreement. This was work to his taste, and with all the solemn and dignified phrases he could command he pledged her, her heirs, and assigns, "so long as water runs and grass grows," to publish nothing against the Government or the Constitution of the United States, but to confine her printing establishment to the publication of Bibles and schoolbooks, thenceforth and forever, unless otherwise permitted by proper authority. The document, with no objection to its stately phrases, was formally signed, sealed, and delivered, one copy to her and one for the War Department, where it will be found on file even at this late day.

With this weighty matter disposed of, I was about to take leave, but meanwhile the ladies connected with the seminaries, none of which had suffered the slightest mistreatment or inconvenience,

had called to pay their respects, after which they decked my horse with garlands and prepared a letter thanking and commending me and my command for our forbearance and good behavior. The document was duly delivered, but the situation was becoming embarrassing. It was a novel performance and I was anxious to put an end to it. After all the troops, except the rear guard, had passed, a violent rainstorm broke upon the scene. Naturally both officers and men, as well as the assembled citizens, expected me to delay my departure, but, instead of doing so, I took to the road, followed by staff and escort, and made a march in pelting rain to a rich and favorably located plantation six miles beyond. Meanwhile I had detached McCook with LaGrange's brigade to follow the railway northeasterly by Opelika to West Point, with instructions to burn the trestles and stations and capture the fort and garrison covering the bridge across the Chattahoochee.

After a comfortable night in a country with plenty of food for man and beast, we resumed the march at early dawn on a beautiful, clear, spring-like morning, by the road through Crawford, to the twin towns of Girard and Columbus, on the opposite sides of the river. Upton had the lead and, brushing the militia out of his way, rapidly closed in upon Girard, where he made all his dispositions for the attack before the middle of the afternoon. Minty's division in rear made its appearance in ample time to support Upton and to take such part in the capture of the place as might fall to its lot. It had borne the brunt of the attack at Selma, and it was naturally Upton's turn to have the post of honor at Columbus.

I was between the two columns and shortly after arriving on the bluff overlooking the valley and the city of Columbus beyond Upton crossed my front within two hundred yards, riding rapidly to the north. Supposing that he had seen me, but was placing his troops and perfecting his dispositions, I neither hailed nor recalled him till he had entirely disappeared. After waiting patiently ten or fifteen minutes for his return, I sent a staff officer after him, but it was fully a half hour before he reached my position. Riding up rapidly and saluting with impatience, he said: "Everything is ready for the assault, but I cannot find Winslow and must delay the attack till he is in position." As I had passed Winslow with his command properly concealed in a wooded valley close by, I pointed out his position, whereupon Upton replied: "But it is now too late. It will be dark before I can get him into position and lead the division to the attack."

As we had already become pretty well accustomed to night fighting and its advantages, it occurred to me that an attack after dark would be accompanied by less loss and greater success than one in full daylight. As the position was a formidable one, with two highway and one railroad bridge connecting the two towns, all covered by a line of formidable entrenchments with many guns in position, I felt that no mistake should be made. So far as could be seen the works were well manned with both infantry and artillery, and every indication led to the belief that we should have a sharp and vigorous fight, which might possibly end in our discomfiture. Consequently, after learning Upton's plan, and satisfying myself by careful scrutiny that it was the

best that could be devised, I expressed my approval and then said: "But it is not too late to carry the plan into effect to-night; you will make all your arrangements to attack at 8:30." With flashing eyes he exclaimed: "Do you mean it? It will be dark as midnight by that hour and that will be a night attack, indeed!" Assuring him that it was just what I wanted and that it should be made, with Minty's division supporting, I instructed him to get everything ready to carry it into effect. With enthusiastic promptitude he exclaimed: "By jingo, I'll do it; and I'll sweep everything before me!"

In approaching Girard Alexander's brigade, with the veteran Eggleston and the First Ohio in the lead, had pressed the enemy rapidly and fiercely back into their works without halting. Retreating rapidly down the road and across the lower bridge, which they had stuffed with cotton and turpentine, the frightened rebels gave the bridge to the flames, and, of course, put an end to the pursuit, as well as to the capture, of Columbus in that direction. It was this fact that hurried Upton northward along the bluffs to the Salem-Opelika road leading by the central highway bridge into the city. With this road as directrix he planned to make the final attack, and had from two to three hours in which to complete his arrangements. With our field guns displayed at commanding points and firing an occasional shot at the entrenchments covering the approaches to the city, it was impossible for the Confederates to discover our real plan or the exact point of attack.

Upton, with consummate ability, made a rapid but close reconnoissance along the rebel entrench-

ments. He had selected Winslow's brigade for the principal attack, and under the cover of darkness, which was intensified by the shadows covering the hillside, placed it, dismounted, in position as close to the enemy's works as it could get without revealing its presence or purpose.

After all arrangements were completed the men made coffee, got supper, and passed an hour in absolute rest, while Upton waited for the appointed minute with confidence and patience. We were together on the turnpike behind the dismounted line. I allowed him the amplest latitude, but every detail of his plan was submitted for my supervision and approval, and when the time came a signal gun was sent and the dismounted cavalrymen, without a moment's hesitation, rushed from their concealment, elbow to elbow, to the attack. The white road through the works was their sole guide and directrix. The intervening ground, obscured by shadows, was soon passed, but when the gallant troopers emerged from cover and got so close to the enemy's entrenchments that the noise of their onward sweep could be heard they were received with a withering fire of musketry and the discharge of twenty-five guns in position swept the ground over which the attack was made. The starlight was so faint, however, that nothing could be clearly seen except the flash of firearms. The roar of artillery and musketry was continuous and appalling, but the enemy fired so high that they did but little harm to our dismounted men. Darkness was their best protection, and, being veterans of four years' experience, they continued their advance unshaken and almost unharmed. Before ten minutes had passed they

closed in and swarmed over the outlying entrenchments and had them firmly in their possession. The defenders fell back in confusion, and, although the rattle and roar of the conflict made night hideous, it was far more noisy than destructive.

The capture of the outlying works followed almost instantaneously. It certainly could not have taken five minutes, and, seeing them firmly in our possession, I personally ordered Benteen with the Tenth Missouri, in column of fours, to enter the captured works and follow the road through the inner entrenchments to the bridge. Promptly responding to this order, that gallant officer moved at the trot, but had gone only a short distance when Upton, who encountered him on the way, directed him to halt and detach two companies to carry out the mission which had been entrusted to the whole regiment. This was done with the greatest spirit under the lead of Captain McGlasson. It will be remembered that there was nothing but starlight and the flash of the enemy's guns to indicate the road or the direction of the advance. McGlasson was a daring and experienced soldier, and, although, much to his surprise, he found himself in front of an inner line of fortifications, he rode coolly through an opening in their parapet, lined on either side with Confederate soldiers, who evidently mistook his command for a part of their own forces. Once inside the *enceinte* he galloped directly to the bridge, captured its guard of fifty men, and sent a detachment through it to capture the battery at the other end. All this was successfully executed, but the enemy, discovering what had happened, at once began to close in upon McGlasson, pouring a heavy

fire on him from all sides. Having no cover from which to fight dismounted, he recalled his lieutenant from the bridge-head and with his united force galloped back to the point from which he had started. By that time Upton had reached the inner line of entrenchments, and under the immediate leadership of Winslow and Noble, with my personal supervision, he threw his whole force against them with an irresistible impulse. Winslow's dismounted men, breaking through the abattis, swept over the entrenchments and put the whole opposing force to flight. It was in this movement that Upton displayed the extraordinary insensibility to danger which always characterized him. With his mind entirely absorbed in the various problems before him and in the measures necessary for their solution, he appeared as utterly unconscious of danger as if he were on parade. Having given instructions for the assault, with the white and dusty highway as the only directrix and the bridges his only aim, he called out continually in a high and penetrating voice, plainly heard above the rattle of carbines and the still louder roar of artillery: "Charge 'em! Charge 'em!" With the bugles repeating the stirring call as the men broke through the slashing and the abattis, and clambered over the entrenchments, I remember the scene almost as vividly as if it were actually passing before my eyes forty-seven years later.

The plan was faultless and easier of execution than it could possibly have been by daylight. Without pausing to take prisoners or to return the scattering fire of the enemy, the dismounted troopers pushed through the main bridge into the town, cry-

ing: "Selma, Selma! Go for the bridge! Waste no time with prisoners!" Upton, Winslow, Noble, Peters, Abrahams, Dee, Dana, Benteen, and Glassford were heroes that night. Every commissioned and non-commissioned officer and every private did his part as though he were a knight of old. The bridge was soon passed, and, although it was stuffed with cotton, wet with turpentine, the gallant troopers rushed across it so intermingled with the flying enemy that those charged with setting fire to the wooden structure and sweeping its roadway with canister and shrapnel were so confused with fear and excitement that they not only failed to apply the torch, but to fire a shot. The brave cannoneers stood to their guns, waiting for orders and making the best personal defense they could. They had adopted every precaution, but resistance was hopeless. Many of them were shot at their post, and such as were not killed or wounded were compelled to surrender to the onrushing victors. The bridge was saved and the city penetrated, but the end was not yet, nor could the victory be regarded as complete till the railroad bridge nearby was seized and the rebels retreating over it were captured. The guns at the burned bridge below were taken, and the scattered detachments left at the defenses, as well as those who had been overborne and driven back, were gathered up and made prisoners. Notwithstanding the confusion and the further fact that the victors found themselves in a strange city, on unknown streets and roads, proper detachments were told off and made their way to the railway station and to the important points with incredible rapidity. Within an hour from the first shot the fighting was

ended, the city was firmly in our possession, and the entire garrison were prisoners, with the exception of one train-load, which included Howell Cobb, a number of officers, a few leading citizens, and a handful of soldiers.

It was the last real battle of the war and had been won in the dark by a single brigade of dismounted cavalry. Columbus was the door to Georgia, four hundred miles from the point where our campaign began. Our troopers had displayed the highest discipline and courage. Every man had acquitted himself like a hero, and, although the resistance had been noisy and determined, by eleven o'clock that night absolute quiet and order reigned throughout the city.

This final performance of the cavalry, involving as it did not only the successful assault of strong entrenchments, but the capture of two bridges spanning the Chattahoochee, was one of the most remarkable, not only of the war, but of modern times, and shows with unerring certainty that American cavalry and mounted infantry when properly trained and led are equal to any enterprise that can fall to their lot by day or by night.

It was not till the next morning that the full value of our victory became known. The enemy's precise loss in killed and wounded was never reported, but, like ours, it was doubtless inconsiderable. Darkness had protected the fighting men of both forces. We captured one thousand five hundred prisoners, twenty-seven guns on the defenses and thirty-six in the arsenal. We burned the shipyard with a new gun-boat ram, the *Jackson,* mounting six heavy guns, and about ready to put to sea.

The most conspicuous man killed in the city was Colonel Lamar of the slave pirate *Wanderer*. He had given up the slave trade and taken his place among the land forces in defense of his native state. He fell by a stray shot near the end of the central bridge after the fighting had ceased.

The most gratifying circumstance connected with this remarkable victory is that our entire loss was only twenty-four officers and men killed and wounded.

As Columbus was the last great manufacturing place and storehouse of the Confederacy and we were still without official information as to what had taken place in Virginia, I resolved to destroy everything within reach that could be made useful for the further continuance of the Rebellion. It will be recalled that up to that time the Confederate authorities had been burning all the baled cotton within reach of our column, whether it belonged to the Confederate Government or to the Southern people. It was the only product of the South that would sell for gold and it was at that time worth over a dollar a pound, for the simple reason that it was required by the entire civilized world. And yet with insensate folly the Confederates were destroying it, as though it were food or military supplies necessary to meet our daily wants. So long as they took that absurd view of it I willingly helped them. Accordingly, the next day, Winslow, in command of the city, burned seven warehouses, containing one hundred and twenty-five thousand bales, and it is a notable circumstance that before the torch was applied the warehouse-men came with their books, showing the number of bales on storage, and asked

me to take for my own use what I thought proper on the sole condition that I should spare the remainder. This, of course, made the destruction all the more certain, but, as at Selma, I was anxious that the burning warehouses should not set fire to private property and saw that every precaution was taken to keep the fire under control. Only one warehouse in the city was spared. That was the property of a Union man, at whose house I made my headquarters, and within the dome of which he assured me the American flag had been kept flying from the outbreak of the war to that unfortunate day. He claimed with the fervor of a patriot that his house and grounds had never been out of the Union. Of course, I ordered his property safeguarded till we withdrew from the city and that was done, but our last man had scarcely taken the road to Macon when Buford's division, of Forrest's corps, entered the town. It is a suggestive fact that the first thing they did was to set fire to and completely destroy the warehouse we had spared.

In addition to one hundred and twenty-five thousand bales of cotton, much of it belonging to the Confederate Government, Winslow destroyed twenty thousand sacks of corn, fifteen locomotives, two hundred and fifty freight cars, the two bridges over the Chattahoochee, the machine shops, roundhouses, and railway supplies, one naval armory and shipyard, two rolling mills with all their machinery, the government arsenal and niter works, two powder magazines, two ironworks, three foundries, ten mills and factories engaged in making cotton cloth, paper, guns, pistols, swords, shoes, wagons, and other military supplies, and over one hundred thousand rounds

of artillery ammunition, together with immense quantities of small arms, military accoutrements, and army clothing of which no account could be taken. The destruction of the last factories, depots, and warehouses of the Confederacy was as complete as fire could make it, and of itself must have been the deathblow to the Confederacy, even if it had been able to keep its armed forces together for a further struggle.

One of the most gratifying incidents of this event was the capture of a notorious Southern newspaper, known as *The Memphis Appeal.* When Memphis was taken the proprietor fled and reëstablished his press at Grenada, whence he removed it to Jackson, the capital of Mississippi. He later transferred it to Atlanta, but when Sherman captured that place the editor turned back to Montgomery, where he continued the publication of disloyal and inflammatory articles against the Union and its armies, adding the name of each place in turn to the title of his journal. As my command approached Montgomery the fire-eating editor again gathered up his presses and printing materials and took train to Columbus. Here, however, we were so close upon his heels that he had no time to set up his press or to resume the publication of his peripatetic journal. He fell into our hands with all his materials, but, recalling the eloquent terms in which Colonel Noble had bound the owner of the *Tuskegee Press* for all time to publish nothing but Bibles and schoolbooks, I detailed him again to draw the bond for our captive editor and proprietor, requiring him henceforth and forever to publish nothing inimical or hostile to the Constitution or to the sovereignty of the Union.

The document was duly executed, forwarded, and filed in the War Department. By that time Noble had become an expert in framing and phrasing such papers and took the keenest delight in binding the editor of the *Memphis-Jackson-Atlanta-Montgomery-Columbus Appeal,* his heirs and assigns forever, in all the formal phraseology of the law, not only to abjure and recant the false doctrines he had professed, but thereafter so long as he might live to conduct himself in deed and work as a loyal citizen of the great Republic.

# VIII

## END OF THE WAR

Capture of West Point by LaGrange—Minty at Double Bridges—Occupation of Macon—Surrender of General Cobb—Peace declared—Croxton's raid—Résumé of campaign.

After the capture of Columbus I sent another messenger through the country to Canby, advising him of my further success and of my future plans; and, while Winslow delayed to destroy the Confederate property and warehouses, I sent Minty with Long's division forward into central Georgia, directing him to push as fast as possible to Thomaston and the Double Bridges of Flint River, some fifty miles to the eastward. With those bridges in our possession nothing could save the state from complete subjugation.

Meanwhile, LaGrange marched rapidly through Opelika to West Point, where there were both a railroad bridge and highway bridge across the Chattahoochee. Following the railway, destroying trestles, bridges, stations, and woodpiles, he captured several trains, and finally at 10 A. M. on April 16 his leading regiment was in front of Fort Tyler, a strong and well-defended, square redoubt, covering both the town and the bridges. While the

next regiment with two field pieces kept the fort and its garrison shut up, LaGrange with the rest of his brigade carried the town entrenchments, rushed across the Chattahoochee bridge, leaping a breach in the roadway, and captured the squad who were trying with turpentine and cotton to set the bridge on fire. Having thus secured control of both bridges, his passage into Georgia was now assured. Satisfied of this important fact, he returned to the west side of the river and without pausing closed in on the fort. By these rapid movements he had not only relieved his command from the danger of a counter attack, but put his entire force in position to attack the keypoint of the defenses.

A rapid reconnoissance convinced him that he was up against a work of commanding position and great strength, held by enough soldiers to repel any ordinary attack. The main fort was a square redoubt of thirty-five yards face, with a closed gorge, the whole surrounded by a ditch twelve feet wide and ten feet deep, and still further strengthened by an abattis and slashing, under command of General Tyler, assisted by Colonel Fannin and about three hundred men, with one thirty-two-pounder sweeping the approaches and the ground beyond with canister and grape. It was a formidable stronghold, but nothing delayed or daunted LaGrange. His skirmishers had already discovered that they would have to bridge the ditches, which was done on three sides by the use of materials obtained by tearing down frame houses nearby. No time was lost in making sap-rollers or ladders. It was evident from the first that if the place could not be carried with a rush it could not be carried at all. So, after plac-

ing two guns, one of which was a rifled field-piece, supported by a close line of skirmishers, to comb the parapets, and to keep down the fire of the fort, LaGrange threw his dismounted men in three separate columns, the first led by Colonel Harnden of the First Wisconsin, the second by Captain Hill of the Fourth Indiana, and the third by Major Bloom of the Seventh Kentucky Cavalry, straight against the rebel citadel. Like heroes of romance, these gallant officers led their men through a withering fire to the ditches, where, without faltering, they laid their bridges, but this work broke their onset and gave the enemy the momentary hope of stopping it entirely. During the short check the enemy threw hand-grenades and poured a withering rifle fire upon the assailants without inflicting serious injury. The bridges were ready in a few minutes, whereupon the bugles sounded the charge and the dismounted troopers, rising to their feet, rushed at the fort, a part crossing the bridges, while the others descended into the ditch. It was a race to see who should get there first, and whether from the level of the bridge or from the bottom of the ditch all clambered up the slopes, crossed the parapets to the terreplein of the fort, shouting and fighting like demons. It was a struggle with swords and clubbed muskets, but the Yankees were too many for the Confederates and forced them to surrender at discretion. Harnden, the older and more deliberate man, reached the flag staff first and had the honor of hauling down the Confederate flag, while Hill, still lame from his wound at Ebenezer Church, was stricken down outside the breastworks by a shot passing through his thigh within an inch of his old wound

and so shattering his leg that it had to be amputated close to his body. It should be recalled that this gallant officer had ridden in my ambulance from Selma till he overheard me detaching his brigade for the movement on West Point. With such wounded men of both sides as could not travel, he was left in a temporary hospital at that place. He was at that time a strong, stalwart, youthful fellow, nearly six feet tall and full size, who, after losing about one-quarter of his weight by the operation, yet recovered so rapidly and so completely that he reported for duty, incredible as it may seem, at the end of twenty days, requesting that he might be permitted to resume command of his regiment. Of course, this request was denied and he was sent on furlough instead, but he always claimed that he was sufficiently recovered before leaving to perform all the duties of his rank. His conduct upon that and numerous other occasions fully justified LaGrange's official statement that "no braver man nor better soldier ever wore a saber. He deserves to command a brigade."

Colonel Biggs of Illinois was an officer of greater age, stature, and rank, who was wounded at Selma by a bullet passing completely through his shoulder and the upper lobe of his right lung. He also reported at the end of twenty days and seemed so perfectly healed that he was actually permitted to resume command of his regiment. These cases are cited to show not only the vigorous character and perfect bodily condition, but the splendid spirit which prevailed among our officers at the close of the war.

In the capture of West Point General Tyler, with

three officers and fourteen privates, were killed, while twenty-eight were wounded, mostly in the head, their bodies having been protected by the breastworks. The remainder fell into our hands as prisoners, and were shortly afterward paroled. LaGrange also captured nineteen locomotives and many passenger and freight cars, besides large quantities of military stores and supplies, all of which, after taking what he required for his command, were destroyed. LaGrange's brigade in this remarkable performance lost only seven killed and twenty-nine wounded, and yet the struggle was a fierce and determined one on both sides.

A year before no officer in either service would have thought of sending cavalry against such entrenchments as those at West Point and Columbus, but after the capture of the redoubts and guns in front of Nashville and of the regular bastioned earthworks covering Selma our officers and men felt that nothing was impossible to them. Relying on their Spencers, firing six shots without reloading, their splendid horse artillery always close up with the skirmish line, they had justly regarded themselves equal to any task that might fall to their lot. It was after the night attack and capture of Columbus with such insignificant loss that Upton, with over three years' experience as an artillery and infantry commander, declared that till then he had no idea of what cavalry could do. After seeing what it actually had done, both at Selma and at Columbus, especially by night fighting, he did not hesitate to declare that his division alone could go anywhere and break its way into any place in the Confederacy. He declared that his men could surmount any

obstruction and clamber over any obstacles they might meet, and that nothing short of the ocean could stop them. When I add that this feeling prevailed throughout the cavalry corps, some definite idea may be had of the discipline as well as of the coherence and aggressive temper which characterized that remarkable body of horsemen.

Having by these divergent operations secured independent crossings of the Chattahoochee at Columbus and at West Point within forty miles of each other, convergent roads were now open to Macon and central Georgia, and every man was confident that nothing could delay or imperil our further progress. Minty's advance reached Flint River and captured the Double Bridges, fifty miles from Columbus, by a single forced march ending in a charge against the detachment guarding the bridges. Some fifty prisoners, together with three pieces of artillery and a wagon train of military supplies, fell into his hands. What was quite as important was the fact that one hundred and fifty horses and mules were also gathered up.

This was the last stand of the enemy till our advance guard under Colonel Frank White of the Seventeenth Indiana reached Mimms Mills at the crossing of the Tobesofkee Creek, fifteen miles west of Macon, on the afternoon of April 20. Some three hundred Confederates had taken position behind the creek, the mills, and a heavy barricade of fence-rails to the right and left. As White made his appearance in front they tore up the planking and set fire to the bridge, and while this checked White's progress, it did not stop him longer than it took to dismount and deploy. Without regard to numbers or to the

position in front, with splendid dash and audacity his troopers rushed through the flames, crossed the bridge on the stringpieces, and charged the entrenchments, sweeping everything before them. This was the final stand of the Confederates and, as though they realized its futility, they threw down their arms and blanket rolls and fled, mounted and on foot, as rapidly as possible from the scene. The only point at which they had the slightest chance to rally was at Rock Creek, where a determined and deliberate foe might have delayed the pursuers, but this was not done, and but little effort was made even to destroy the bridge at that place.

Waiting only for his column to close up, White again took the road at the trot and shortly after getting under way he met a flag of truce borne by General Robertson, a West Point companion of mine, with a letter from General Howell Cobb to "The Commanding General, United States forces." Pausing merely to ask what it was about and, hearing that it was from General Beauregard to General Cobb, directing him to inform the commanding officer of the troops in his front that "a truce looking to a final settlement had been entered into the day before between General Sherman and General Johnston in North Carolina," with rare presence of mind White promptly declared: "I know nothing about 'truces, armistices or final settlements.' All I can do is to send this letter back to General Minty, my division commander, and wait for further orders." Minty, who was close behind, opened the envelope and read the enclosure. Realizing that he was also a subordinate, he sent it in turn to me. Having done this, he ordered White to give the flag of truce

five minutes to get out of the way and then to resume his march on Macon in accordance with previous instructions. White, already getting impatient, pulled out his watch and, turning to Robertson, with whom he had been chatting pleasantly enough, said: "My orders require me to push for Macon as rapidly as possible, and I'll give you just five minutes to get out of the way with your flag of truce and escort." Realizing that discussion could not change the situation, Robertson, wheeling about and rejoining his own escort, started at a brisk trot to report to his commanding officer.

Meanwhile White, at the end of the short period of grace, resumed the advance, but, moving at a quicker gait, overtook the flag of truce as it was closing up on the defeated detachment driven from the Tobesofkee an hour before. White realized, however, that both were retreating slowly and with deliberation for the purpose of gaining time and delaying our march. It was an exciting and somewhat puzzling situation. It was nearly sunset and quite apparent that the enemy was doing what he could without actually fighting to make delay. I was far in rear, with the other parts of the corps moving on converging roads for a common objective. At the same time both Minty and White, realizing that it would be inconvenient, to say the least, for either themselves or the rest of the corps to halt outside the defenses of Macon, hastened their march as much as possible. Fearing that delay on their part would enable the enemy to destroy the remaining bridges, they rushed each as they came to it and, fortunately, not only saved them all, but kept the road intact for the corps to enter the important city that night.

Fortunately, Cobb's communication did not reach me till 6 P. M., when I was still nineteen miles from Macon. I, therefore, made no written reply, but sent an officer to halt the head of column if he should overtake it. I then hastened my own march with a half dozen staff officers and a small escort, for the purpose of ascertaining the actual condition of affairs before replying to General Cobb or acknowledging the existence of an armistice applicable to my command.

While I moved rapidly and it was completely dark, my situation was a peculiar one. It will be remembered that, with Sherman in North Carolina, and Thomas in middle Tennessee, I was conducting an independent campaign through the country which separated them and had the amplest latitude of an independent commander. I was over five hundred miles behind Sherman and as many in advance of Thomas and, although I should have cheerfully obeyed the slightest order of either, I felt that it was my first duty, while caring for my own command, to look out for the interests of the government in the region under my immediate observation. With this thought uppermost, I pushed on toward Macon as rapidly as I could, but, on arriving at the fortifications at half past eight, I found them, as well as the city, safely in White's possession, with the garrison shut up in the stockade pen which the Confederates had built for Yankee prisoners. Cobb, G. W. Smith, Makall, Mercer, and Robertson, with their respective staff officers, were impatiently awaiting me at the City Hall. They had made no defense, but yielded under protest to a force they could not successfully resist. Cobb, the chief com-

mander, claimed that White's action was in violation of an armistice which, according to his views, was equally binding on the National as well as the Confederate troops operating in that region. Proud and imperious by nature, he could not be made to understand that, while he had received direct orders from his own chief and was bound to obey them, my subordinates could neither acknowledge him as a proper channel of communication, nor assume the responsibility of suspending operations which they had been told off to conduct. They were old and experienced soldiers who knew their own duty and naturally doubted the disinterestedness of the enemy. They could neither be persuaded nor bullied into heeding any orders except mine, and in this they were clearly right. In spite of Cobb's vehement contention, both Minty and White insisted on their right not only to disarm the garrison, but to confine it as prisoners of war. With this done and the city under perfect control, they met me at the outworks and conducted me directly to the City Hall. Here I met Howell Cobb for the first time and had a most interesting interview with him and his officers. The general, who was noted for his proud and haughty bearing, even among the Southerners, received me with lofty politeness, but, without wasting any time whatever in civilities, renewed his protest against his capture, insisting not only that I should acknowledge the armistice as promulgated in the communication he had sent me that morning, but that I should withdraw my troops from the city to the point at which my advance guard met his flag of truce. This I, of course, promptly declined with the statement that nobody

had a right to stop my command against my will; that my officers had acted strictly within their orders; that I had used due diligence to overtake my head of column, but, having failed, I regarded General Cobb and his command rightfully as prisoners of war.

Thereupon, the General, declining to consider the matter from my point of view, in emphatic terms reiterated his demand for the unconditional release of his command and himself and for the restoration of what he proudly designated as "the *status quo ante.*"

Seeing that argument was useless without more exact information than I had yet received, I said: "General, if there is an armistice in existence there must be full justification for it and I can imagine none sufficient except the surrender of Lee and his army. Has that event taken place?"

Thereupon, with great dignity and decision, he answered: "Sir, I am not here to give you information. I decline to answer your questions and I again demand the unconditional release of myself and my command."

To this I replied with corresponding firmness: "I shall not comply with your demand and you must consider that point settled for good and all."

Turning then to General Gustavus W. Smith, an old and distinguished West Pointer, whom I had met while a cadet, and who was now at Macon as commander of the Georgia Militia, I said: "General Smith, I am going to ask you the question I have just asked General Cobb and hope you feel at liberty to answer it fully and frankly. Have General Lee and his army surrendered?" Straightening

himself up and drawing in his chin in a manner peculiar to himself, the general, without a moment's hesitation, replied: "Yes, sir, Lee and his army have surrendered!"

As this was the first trustworthy information I had on that subject, I regarded it as absolutely true as well as sufficient to account for and even justify an armistice. I, therefore, turned to Cobb and said: "General, while I no longer doubt that an armistice is in existence, I cannot admit its application to my command till I receive confirmation, with proper instructions, from General Sherman for my government in regard thereto, but I shall conduct my operations hereafter on the theory that any man killed on either side is a man murdered. General, you and your officers, with this understanding, may go to your quarters on your parole of honor that you will report here daily at nine o'clock till further orders."

Thus ended the interview in a manner apparently satisfactory to all. Even Cobb, although still sullen and deeply dejected, accepted my decision as the best he could get. Thereupon, he and his officers took their leave and thenceforth conducted themselves in a most satisfactory as well as a most complimentary manner to me and to my authority.

Macon at that time was the leading city of central Georgia and came under my control late on April 20, 1865. When my interview with Cobb and his officers came to an end it was nearly midnight. Considering the exciting incidents of the last four weeks, I realized that the last campaign, as well as the war, was ended, and I was heartily glad of it. After wishing my unwilling guests a friendly goodnight, I went to the Lanier House, where my staff

had established headquarters. It was the leading hotel in full operation, and, although I can scarcely claim that we were welcome, the manager assigned me and my staff the best rooms he had and did all in his power to make us comfortable. It was after midnight before I received reports from the various officers and gave proper instructions for the maintenance of order and the protection of persons and property.

Both General Minty and Colonel White had displayed such sound judgment and such unusual enterprise on the march and in forcing the city to surrender without waiting for me that I felt under special obligation to them. White had covered the entire distance from Columbus to Macon, one hundred and four miles, from 6 P. M., April 18, to the same hour of April 20, and this heightened the satisfaction with which I received the information that, immediately after occupying the city and confining his prisoners, he took all proper precautions without waiting for orders to post videttes, patrol the streets, and place the citizens under perfect safety and control. When I reached there two hours and a half later it was as quiet as a country village that had never heard a harsher tone than a flute note.

In special recognition of his valuable services I assigned him to the command of the city, in which position he proved himself to be a judicious and able administrator. In addition to maintaining order, it was his duty to gather up and care for such Confederate property, both civil and military, as might be in the warehouses or the surrounding country. With our large force the question of food and forage and the care of supplies at hand were mat-

ters of great importance in connection with which White also rendered most valuable services.

While the armistice and its applicability to my command were still under consideration I proposed to dissolve all doubt by sending a message of inquiry over the Confederate telegraph to Sherman through Beauregard's headquarters at Greensborough, North Carolina. As Cobb agreed, I prepared a message, dated 9 P. M., April 20, saying in substance that my advance had captured and occupied Macon after meeting a flag of truce which claimed the existence of an armistice applicable to both sides; that I had not been able to overtake my advance in time to prevent the capture; that I should, therefore, hold Generals Cobb, Smith, and Makall with the garrison as prisoners of war; and, finally, that I should remain there a reasonable time for orders. Fearing that this frank declaration might be changed in transmission, I transposed it into cipher, in which form it duly reached Sherman, but not till after he had sent me through the same channel a dispatch dated 2 P. M., April 21, which I received at 6 P. M. the same day. While it was not in reply to mine, it made it certain that Sherman had agreed with Johnston "for a universal suspension of hostilities looking to a peace over the whole surface of our country," which he felt, "assured would be made perfect in a few days." He added: "You will, therefore, desist from further acts of war and devastation until you hear that hostilities are resumed." From the rest of the message which referred to the subsistence of my command in western and southwestern Georgia and directed me to communicate the information it contained to Canby, it is evident

that Sherman did not know my exact whereabouts, nor that I was so far east as Macon.

The newspapers shortly afterward reported Sherman as having directed me to release my prisoners and to withdraw my command to the place at which my advance met the flag of truce, but I received no such instructions and doubt if any such were ever sent. The lines were certainly open to both Sherman and myself, and if he had desired to send such orders they would have been promptly transmitted.

Regarding Sherman's message as authentic, I decided to suspend operations till ordered by proper authority to resume them, or till circumstances should require independent action. I have no doubt this decision was correct, and should have been greatly surprised had Sherman disapproved or overruled it.

By the next day Cobb had become reconciled to my course, and, foreseeing that the addition of so large a force to the population of Macon would bring about a scarcity of provisions, he gave me every assistance, not only advising me as to the districts in which forage and provisions could be found, but directing his quartermasters and commissaries to ship such forage and provisions as they might have on hand to my chief quartermaster at Macon. And, what is more to his credit, he did this even before he knew the actual terms of the arrangement between Sherman and Johnston.

It is a matter of history that Cobb was not only one of the largest slaveholders, but an original secessionist, whose proudest boast was that his state followed him, not he his state. Nor is there any

doubt that from the first he threw his whole heart and fortune into the Confederate cause, but he was sagacious enough to know when Lee and Johnston surrendered and Davis became a fugitive that the end had come, and from that moment he did all in his power to restore order and confidence and to help earnestly in the work which pressed upon me at Macon. He was a man of austere manners and great dignity, who scorned to ask favors for himself, but did his utmost to ameliorate the condition of his fellow-citizens. It is a matter of sincere gratification to me that our acquaintance, begun under such unusual conditions, soon ripened into a friendship which lasted till his death, and was continued by his family to the present time.

Hostilities having ceased from the hour of our occupation, my first duty was to collect my command and put it in a state of readiness for whatever might be required. Fortunately, this was an easy task. Upton, following closely behind Minty, left only McCook's division to come in. LaGrange's brigade, after its splendid victory at West Point, left that place on the 17th, passing through LaGrange, where it also broke the railroad, marched thence to the Macon and Atlanta Railroad, which it followed through Griffin and Forsyth to Macon, arriving at that place early on the 21st, where it remained in camp till the end of the month. The performances of this brigade, operating generally by itself or on detached service, were quite remarkable. They are summed up by LaGrange as follows:

A march of five hundred miles through the enemy's country, the capture of four hundred and fifty-six prisoners with arms in their hands, including thirty-five officers,

seven battle flags, twenty-one thousand three hundred stands of small arms, two siege guns in position, six field pieces, three steamboats laden with stores, twenty locomotives, two hundred and fifty cars loaded with stores and machinery, and enough horses and mules to replace those broken down by the march; the destruction of eight railroad depots, storehouses, water tanks, wood piles, three railroad and two covered bridges, and innumerable culverts, three large cotton factories, a saddle factory, niter works, tanneries, three foundries, two machine shops, two rolling mills, and a large number of smaller manufacturing establishments. Where it was possible the provisions captured from the enemy were given to the poor.

The casualties of the brigade were ten killed, sixty-four wounded, and sixteen missing. The brigade did all that it was ordered to do, but, considering the nature of the expedition, the temptations offered, and the injuries many of our men had previously received from the rebels, I have less pride in what was accomplished than in what was omitted. The steadiness, valor, and self-denial of the men are beyond my praise.

In addition, the brigade recaptured two United States regimental colors. In sending his trophies to headquarters LaGrange cited the fact that the First Wisconsin, of which he was colonel, was first in the fort at West Point and lost twice as many men as both the other assaulting columns. He, therefore, modestly requested as a personal favor to himself and as a reward for the good conduct of the regiment that the garrison flag of Fort Tyler should be returned to Colonel Harnden with permission to send it to the Governor of Wisconsin, to be placed in the State capitol among the trophies forwarded by other regiments. He added: "No other trophy has ever been asked for by the regi-

ment and no regiment from the State has captured a greater number."[1]

It will be remembered that Croxton was detached from the main column at Elyton at 4 P. M. on March 30, with one thousand five hundred men in the saddle, for the purpose of capturing Tuscaloosa and destroying the Alabama Military Academy, the factories, and whatever else might be found at that place beneficial to the rebel cause. That done, I personally instructed him if practicable to break the railroad between Selma and Demopolis. The last word received from him was up to April 3. On that night he carried the Black Warrior bridge by assault, taking sixty prisoners and three pieces of artillery, thus putting his command in position to occupy Tuscaloosa at daylight the next morning. From that time the story of his march reads like a romance of chivalry. After scattering the garrison and corps of cadets and burning the Military Academy, the foundry, factory, and niter works at Tuscaloosa, supplying his command with all the provisions they could carry, and sending out reconnoitering parties while resting the main body of his brigade, he devoted himself to working out a plan for rejoining the corps. He knew that both Jackson and Chalmers were between him and me, and, believing that the country behind them was open for an incursion, he struck out to the southwest by King's Store and Lanier's Mills for the Demopolis-Selma Railroad with the hope of reaching and breaking it effectually. He reasoned correctly upon this and other occasions that if Forrest detached a force inferior to his own to look after

[1] O. R. Serial No. 103, pp. 427 *et seq.*

him, he would "smash it up" and go whither he pleased, while if Forrest sent a superior force against him it would be his object to draw it as far as possible from the theater in which the larger forces were operating and thus give our cavalry corps a still greater advantage in numbers.

On April 6, while moving down the Tombigbee, which was then much swollen, he learned that Wirt Adams was marching to meet him with a heavier force than his own; that Selma had been taken; that Forrest and Chalmers were at Marion; and that Jackson was still in the neighborhood of Tuscaloosa. Fearing that these forces would unite and turn against him, he prudently resolved to retrace his steps, but while doing so his rear guard was overtaken and had a sharp fight near Romulus with Adams's command, which he estimated at two thousand eight hundred men. In that affair he lost two officers and thirty-two men, but put up such a stubborn fight that the enemy drew off and molested him no further.

His only purpose henceforth was to rejoin the corps. Marching first to the northeastward, he struck the Byler road and followed it twelve or fifteen miles on the 8th. Here he rested for three days, trying to open communication with me, but, failing in that, he made his way by a circuitous route across Wolf Creek, Blackwater, Sipsey, Mulberry, and Locust forks of the Black Warrior and thence across the Cahawba River into the Elyton valley.

As it was spring and all the streams high, most of the bridges were gone and the roads were nearly impassable. Fording or swimming was necessary

in many cases, and it was not till the 19th that Croxton reached Mount Pinson, fourteen miles north of Elyton, where he learned at last that after taking Montgomery I had continued my march to the eastward.

From that time his course was plain, but his difficulties were by no means ended. In marching to join me he naturally chose a northerly route, where the streams were smaller, but, as they were all swollen and some of them wide, his difficulties were great. After destroying the foundry and niter works near Mount Pinson, he passed through Trussville and Cedar Grove, where he turned toward Montevallo to give the impression that he was going that way. On April 21 he moved eastward toward Talladega, which brought him the next day to the Coosa, an unfordable stream over which he had to ferry, and this was slow and dangerous work. The enemy in his front apparently had not heard of the events in Virginia, and, as Croxton was in the same state of ignorance, the war continued in that section with frequent skirmishes, ending in a sharp affair at Munford Station with five hundred men and one piece of artillery under the command of General Hill. After capturing the artillery and a number of prisoners and scattering the force in front of him, Croxton destroyed the Oxford and Blue Mountain Iron Works, the railroad bridges and depots, rolling stock, a large quantity of ordnance stores, and a cotton factory. On April 26 he crossed the Chattahoochee and met a flag of truce from Newnan, Georgia, informing him of the armistice between Sherman and Johnston and claiming protection under it. While admitting the probability that

a truce had been entered into, like the corps commander, he declined to recognize it as official or to discontinue his march, but gravely notified the rebel authorities that he "would trouble nobody who kept out of his way." This done, he crossed Flint River at Flat Shoals on April 28, and, marching by the way of Barnesville to Forsyth on the railroad, he sent two of his staff officers by train to inform me of his whereabouts. This was the first direct report I had received from him for just one month. The next day he rejoined the corps at Macon, having marched six hundred and fifty-three miles, most of the way through a country so destitute of supplies that he subsisted his command with the greatest difficulty. He swam four large rivers, destroyed five ironworks, three factories, numerous mills, and immense quantities of supplies. In addition, he captured four pieces of artillery, three hundred prisoners, and a large quantity of small arms. His own losses were four officers and one hundred and sixty-eight men, half of the latter captured while foraging or scouting. Throughout this long and arduous campaign his veterans never faltered. Officers and men vied with each other in the cheerful performance of every duty. He specially commended Colonels Dorr, Kelly, and Johnston, Major Fidler, and Captain Penn. He was accompanied throughout this march by Lieutenant Prather, Fourth Indiana Cavalry, one of my aids-de-camp, who gave me a most glowing account of the steadiness and efficiency of both officers and men from the time they were detached till they rejoined the corps.

Having described in some detail the organization of the cavalry corps and given some account of its

great performances, including those of its detachments, I am sure I shall be pardoned for again calling attention to the fact that its great successes were mainly due to the policy of concentration which I inaugurated and, as far as permitted, carried into effect, operating *en masse* as far as possible, instead of in detachments, as had hitherto been the rule.

From the day I took command in front of Hood till we defeated and drove him from the state with the loss of his artillery, trains, and many thousand prisoners, I kept the policy of concentration constantly in force. At the beginning of that campaign, it will be remembered, I found only five thousand five hundred men in the saddle. At the middle, by the purchase and impressment of horses, we had fourteen thousand, of which three thousand were detached to drive Lyon and Crossland from western Kentucky. At the end, although we had lost over six thousand horses in two weeks from overwork and exposure, muddy and frozen roads, rainy and sleety weather, in a wild and desolate country, devoid of food and forage, we reached the Tennessee River with only seven thousand five hundred men in the saddle.

In a few weeks thereafter I had collected into cantonments between Gravelly Spring and Waterloo Landing six divisions, amounting to an aggregate of twenty-seven thousand men, all of whom, except one division, were mounted and ready for service. After sending Knipe's division to Canby, detaching Johnston's for service in middle Tennessee, and leaving Hatch's behind on the Tennessee, because horses could not be got, we took the field with three divisions, all of which, except one brigade with the wagon

train, were mounted, equipped, and fully provided for a sixty days' campaign. They were all armed with Spencer magazines, carbines, and rifles, and it is worthy of repetition that this was the first army corps in the world armed with such firearms. It is also worthy of repetition that much of their surprising success was due to that fact.

During Hood's Advance and Retreat the corps marched approximately three hundred miles, the last two hundred in midwinter. It turned the enemy's left flank at Nashville, took his line in reverse, assaulted and captured three redoubts, took thirty-two field guns, twelve battle flags, three thousand two hundred and thirty-two prisoners, one pontoon train of eighty boats, many wagons, and thousands of horses, mules, and small arms.

General Thomas twice thanked me in orders for "its success, good conduct, and dashing gallantry" and for "its vigor, skill, and bravery in the long and toilsome pursuit of the retreating rebel army." Many of its officers and men, from division commander to private soldier, were mentioned by name for promotion and for medals of honor which were issued for "unusual and conspicuous gallantry."

During the pursuit of Hood it lost one gun which it recaptured in the Selma campaign. It had one hundred and twenty-two officers and men killed, five hundred and twenty-one wounded, and two hundred and fifty-nine missing.

By reference to the reports, which will be found fully set forth in the Official Records,[1] it will be seen that the corps in its last campaign from the Tennessee River to Macon, Georgia, where it was

[1] O. R. Serial No. 103.

stopped by the armistice and the subsequent surrender of Johnston's army, marched an average of five hundred and twenty-five miles in twenty-eight days, crossed six large rivers, captured five fortified cities and towns, twenty-three stands of colors, two hundred and eighty-eight pieces of artillery, six thousand eight hundred and twenty prisoners in battle, including five generals. It also captured and destroyed two gun-boats nearly ready for sea with the shipyards in which they were constructed, seven ironworks, seven foundries, seven machine shops, two rolling mills, seven collieries, thirteen factories, two niter works, one military university, three arsenals and contents, one naval armory and contents, one powder magazine and contents, five steamboats and cargoes, thirty-five locomotives, five hundred and sixty-five passenger and freight cars, a great number of railroad bridges, trestle-works, and stations, besides immense quantities of quartermaster, commissary, and ordnance stores which could not be enumerated. In addition to the foregoing trophies of war the corps, after the peace was declared, paroled six thousand one hundred and thirty-four commissioned officers and fifty-three thousand seven hundred and forty-four enlisted men.

Summarizing the principal items for the two campaigns, it marched eight hundred and twenty-five miles and captured ten thousand and fifty-two prisoners, thirty-five colors and three hundred and twenty guns in the open field and behind fortifications.

During its last campaign it lost thirteen officers and eighty-six enlisted men killed, thirty-nine officers and five hundred and fifty-nine enlisted men

wounded, and seven officers and twenty-one men missing. Or from the time it left Nashville till the surrender at Macon, it lost a total of two hundred and twenty-one officers and men killed, eleven hundred and fifty-nine wounded and two hundred and eighty-seven missing.

The march from Montgomery to Macon, two hundred and fifteen miles, was made between the 14th and 20th of April at an average rate, including the delay at Columbus and West Point, of slightly over thirty miles per day. Involving, as this march did, the capture of two fortified bridge-heads commanding the crossings of the Chattahoochee River, and the destruction of the Confederate property at those places, it may well be considered as one of the most rapid and important campaigns made by either side during the War for the Union. Indeed, the campaign from the Tennessee River through Selma, Montgomery, and Columbus may be fairly claimed as the most rapid, far-reaching, and successful cavalry campaign of modern times.

The complete destruction of the iron works, foundries, collieries, factories, and boat yards with their supplies and provisions, as well as the principal lines of railroad communication, connecting the armies under Taylor, Beauregard, and Johnston was an irreparable blow to the Confederacy.

Lee and other Confederate generals have been praised for accepting the inevitable results and for surrendering their armies and declining to inaugurate a guerrilla war, but it must be remembered that those officers had no choice. The great mass of the enemy's armed force was in our hands as prisoners of war or had deserted their colors and taken to the

woods. The means of transporting troops, food, arms, and military munitions having been effectually destroyed, there was nothing left for the Southern leaders east of the Mississippi to do but lay down their arms, disband their organizations, and return to the walks of peace. "The rich man's war and the poor man's fight" had been fought to a finish. It was ended for good and all, for the sufficient reason that the means of carrying it on and keeping rank and file with the colors, had been completely destroyed, and it is but justice to the Cavalry Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi, to assert that this great result was due more to its prowess and performances than to any other single cause.

It had put an end by its example to the cavalry raid with a weak and inadequate force, and had introduced instead the great campaign with an army of mounted men. In doing this it made the last campaign and fought the last battle of the great war and at the close had something over thirteen thousand white mounted infantry and cavalry and thirty-six hundred negro infantry with the colors. In addition every cavalry man was mounted and it had besides eight thousand horses and mules for its teams and for distribution afterward. It was a close, compact, and efficient organization of three divisions and six brigades with from three to five regiments to a brigade and a battery of horse artillery to each division, the whole capable of marching easily and indefinitely at the average rate of thirty-five miles per day. It is worthy of special note that this rate would have brought it to a junction with Sherman and Kilpatrick in North Carolina or even with Grant and Sheridan in Virginia inside of thirty days. With

such a reënforcement either army, separate or the two united, would have been invincible against any force the Confederacy could have mustered, no matter what stroke of good fortune might have fallen to its lot. When we add that from the time the cavalry corps left Nashville till it reached Macon it attacked no fortifications that it did not carry, and came within range of no cannon that it did not capture. When it is recalled that in all this, it never avoided nor went around, but in every case attacked and passed through the Confederate cities and towns on or near its route, it will be readily admitted that it fully justified Sherman's high praise when he said that it was by far the largest, best equipped, and best handled cavalry force that ever came under his command.

Finally, it seems to have fairly earned for me these kindly words from John Hay: "General J. H. Wilson, who had been put in command of all the cavalry in the Military Division of the Mississippi, and who came endorsed by Grant, with the prediction that he would increase the efficiency of that arm by fifty per cent." . . .

"The ride of Wilson's troopers into Alabama was one of the most important and fruitful expeditions of the war. . . . If the Confederacy had not already been wounded to death, the loss of Selma would have been almost irreparable. . . . It justified by its celerity, boldness, and good judgment the high encomium with which Grant sent Wilson to Thomas."[1]

[1] "Life of Lincoln," Nicolay and Hay, Vol. X., pp. 8, 234, 238, 241.

# IX

## CAPTURE OF JEFFERSON DAVIS

Administration of affairs in Macon—Measures for the capture of Davis—Jefferson Davis captured.

After the capture of Columbus, West Point, and Macon, it was evident that there was no Confederate force left to carry on the war in any part of Georgia. The granary of the Confederacy had escaped the horrors and devastation of war. Even Sherman after capturing Atlanta left southwestern Georgia intact, and on his March to the Sea came no nearer Macon than Milledgeville, the capital of the State. Although Cobb with a few thousand Confederate soldiers and militia made the best fight he could at Columbus and did all in his power to delay us on the road, the people themselves kept as close to their homes as possible, suspending all business employments and waiting for such outrages as they had been taught to believe the Yankees would inflict upon then. Although we were forced to impress food and forage from the region through which we were marching, it was our custom to do this with as much regularity and impartiality as possible, and when it is remembered that the path of a marching column, whether cavalry or infantry, is necessarily narrow even for the foragers, it will be seen that

relatively few people suffer severe loss and that those who are absolutely cleaned out have but little distance to go to the right or left in order to supply themselves with food from their neighbors. The real difficulty and hardship comes when a corps with a large number of men and animals is compelled to halt, for in that case it soon clears a country of both forage and provisions. We had already discovered that an ordinary county would not feed our seventeen thousand men and twenty-two thousand animals longer than a day or two without greatly impoverishing the people. Sherman knew this as well as anybody, and hence his telegram, calling attention to southwestern Georgia and directing me to purchase supplies in that region as far as possible, was both kindly and considerate, and so far as it was necessary and practicable his instructions were carried into effect. But the left-over Confederate supplies were soon exhausted and those in the hands of the people were drawn upon heavily. All foraging was, of course, discontinued from the time the war had ended. This, together with the fact that there was no tendency amongst the cavalrymen to violence, had a reassuring and tranquilizing effect. The people gradually resumed their usual avocations and, perceiving that we were not the barbarians they had been accustomed to call us, gradually softened in their behavior, and some even went so far as to speak of us as fellow countrymen. While division, brigade, and regimental commanders busied themselves with the maintenance of discipline and good order in the camps and about them, the leading men of the community, both soldiers and civilians, responded by counselling moderation of behavior and

total abstention from political discussion on the part of the people. Evidently the soldiers as well as the citizens were heartily glad the war was over. Here and there a woman failed to recognize that fact, and if she spoke at all, flouted the Union and those who upheld it.

A day or two after we established headquarters at the City Hall, the national flag was hanging over the street, when one of the principal ladies out shopping, caught sight of its shadow on the sidewalk, and as though she might commit herself to something she or her neighbors would not like, rather than pass under it, she crossed over the street and started down the other side. As she did this, Colonel White, of stalwart frame and flowing beard, caught sight of her through the window. Buttoning his coat and hitching up his saber, he walked down the steps and across the street, meeting the lady opposite headquarters. Lifting his hat with dignity and politeness, he took her hand and placing it under his arm said: "Permit me, madam," and with that led her, trembling and confused, carefully across the street, and then pointing to the flag, he added: "Madam, you seem to fear that the shadow of the stars and stripes will do you some injury, but I assure you you are mistaken. That flag is the emblem of national sovereignty and of equal rights to all. It is the banner of our reunited country, and when you think you can pass under it without shying, you will be permitted to go about your business." After escorting her once more beneath its folds, he gallantly raised his hat again and bade her good morning. The incident, of course, soon became known throughout the town, and it gives me pleasure to

add that it needed no repetition. From that day forth the flag was treated with perfect respect by every member of the community. Good order prevailed from the day of our entry, and although the negroes showed a disposition to leave the farms and to flock to the towns, it would have been difficult for the onlooker to perceive any unusual movement in Macon. Notice was given that both blacks and whites were expected to remain at home, and this was emphasized by the fact that our Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri cavalrymen soon made it known that they had no use for "idle niggers."

Shortly after the occupation of the place the provost marshal reported that two dead negroes had been found in the Ocmulgee River with bullet holes in their bodies, indicating that they had been murdered. Investigation cast suspicion upon the soldiers and the soldiers cast suspicion upon the citizens, and while the real murderers were never discovered, the investigation produced a good effect. Becoming known in the neighborhood, it discouraged vagabondage and idle curiosity. But with all we could do there was more or less uneasiness and discontentment among the negroes, especially the house servants.

One morning a lady in the deepest mourning asked for a personal interview with General Wilson. She was shown in, but had hardly reached her seat before she showed that she was in a state of great agitation. Of course, I asked her name and business, whereupon, throwing up her hands and bursting into a storm of tears and sobs, she said: "I am Mrs. Blank of Blank. And, oh, sir! I have shot my nigger! I have shot my nigger!" Then rocking to

and fro as though she feared instant execution, she gradually regained her composure, as I said what I could to soothe and reassure her. My sympathy as well as my curiosity were thoroughly aroused while she told her tragic story between her sighs and sobs.

It appears that a slave woman, her cook and laundress, left home when she heard the Yankees had come, but after her excitement was over had gone back to get the washtub which she had come to regard as her own. Unfortunately, she found her mistress seated at the cooking stove, probably for the first time in her life, roasting coffee. In reply to a question she said: "Miss Jane, I've come back for de tub." Whereupon the mistress told her she could not have it and bade her begone. When she rose from her chair as though she would enforce her command, the colored woman put her arms about her shoulders and forced her back into the seat. This was more than any Southern woman could endure, and boiling over with rage, she drew from her pocket a small revolver, which she pointed upward and fired. Although her arms were pinioned, the shot ploughed through the colored woman's cheek and knocked her senseless to the floor. The blood flowed freely and consternation prevailed. The neighbors rushed in and did what they could to restore order and give help, but before the wounded woman's injury was fully known, or the local authorities were found, they hurried the mistress off to make a virtue of telling her story first to the commanding general.

On her own statement it was a serious case made still more so by the paralysis of such justice as the

local laws provided, but after satisfying myself that the injured woman was not dead, and assuring the mistress that she might go for the present with an aid-de-camp who would make further investigation, I permitted her to return home. The next day I was gratified to learn that the wound was but a superficial one which would soon heal and that the mistress had not only suffered almost as much as the victim of her wrath, but had done what she could for the comfort and cure of her old servant. What the public expected in this case I never knew, but on the officer's report, I was glad to drop it and to leave the future relations of the parties to the ameliorating hand of time.

Shortly afterward a more difficult and complicated case came to my attention. A negro, arrested and imprisoned for a petty offense, had apparently been forgotten. After ten days or two weeks he was offered his release on the payment of $50 to a disbanded Confederate colonel making his way home to Mississippi. It was also reported that the colonel had arranged to give half the money in this and in similar cases to the assistant provost marshal for his coöperation. The story as told was almost incredible, but satisfying myself that it was substantially true, I directed that the lieutenant should be court-martialed and that the Confederate colonel should be arrested and imprisoned for ten days in the cell of the released negro. My orders were promptly carried into effect, and as the people heard of and approved my action in these cases, much to my surprise, I became somewhat popular with them.

The first day after reaching Macon a leading

citizen and lawyer, afterward a distinguished judge, came for permission to resume the publication of the *Macon Messenger* as a daily newspaper, which I granted on the sole condition that it should publish nothing against the United States or its Constitution. Two days later the same gentleman came again and asked if I had any printers in my command, adding that his compositors had struck and that he was exceedingly anxious to get out the paper at the usual hour the next morning. Turning to my aid, Captain Van Antwerp of the Fourth Michigan Cavalry, whom I knew to be a practical compositor and the editor of the *Jackson Patriot,* I asked if he had any printers in his troop. He replied at once: "Oh, yes. I have between seventy and eighty." After learning that only three or four were needed, I directed the captain to send down ten or a dozen to get the paper out. I need only add that when they appeared with rattling sabers and jingling spurs, the strike instantly ended. The old printers hastened to say everything was "all right" and that the paper would be forthcoming at the proper hour. But the Michigan men, instead of returning to camp that night, went to the cases and completed the type-setting in shorter time than it had ever been done before. They thoroughly enjoyed the change of work and returned to camp next morning a jolly and elated lot, assuring their foreman, one of their own non-commissioned officers, that they would be glad to undertake any other printing job the breakdown of the Confederacy might bring to their attention. As far as I know, however, this was the only case and their services were not again required.

But the first week of our stay in Macon derived its chief importance from other and far more important matters. Sherman's dispatch of April 20, telling me of the truce and the arrangement he had entered into with Johnston for "a universal suspension of hostilities," although definite enough, was followed by no detailed instructions. On the contrary, I was left entirely to my own discretion for eight or nine days. I knew that the silence which had fallen on General Cobb and the state authorities alike indicated a hitch in the arrangements somewhere, but I heard nothing definite till April 30 brought—again over the Confederate wires—the news that Johnston had surrendered not only his army but all other Confederate forces east of the Chattahoochee on terms identical with those Grant had extended to Lee and the Army of North Virginia at Appomattox.

On May 1, the very next day, I received through the hands of Colonel Woodall, who had come by the way of Chattanooga and Atlanta from Thomas at Nashville, an order from Stanton, secretary of war, notifying me as well as other commanders that Sherman's first truce had been disapproved, and directing me to disregard his orders and resume operations forthwith against the enemy's armed forces wherever they might be found. While I did nothing under these orders for the simple reason that they had been rendered nugatory by the time lost in transmission, they confirmed me in the determination to act in all cases according to the requirements of the public interests. While the final capitulation made it clear that all Confederate officers and men who laid down their arms should be

paroled and allowed to remain at home without further molestation, Stanton's order, issued prior to the actual surrender, seemed to indicate that it was the policy of the Government that we should pursue and capture the Confederate chiefs who might be trying to escape from the country. At all events, this was the view I took of that matter. I had already learned on April 23, from a foreign-born citizen of Georgia that he had seen Jefferson Davis and his family a few days before at Charlotte, North Carolina, with several members of his cabinet and the remains of the Confederate treasury, making their way south under an escort.

Although the President of the Confederate States was also commander-in-chief of their army and navy under their Constitution, it was evident that Davis did not consider himself as covered by the terms of the capitulation, but was endeavoring to reach the trans-Mississippi Department or to escape from the country. It was a juncture of extreme gravity and I gave every circumstance connected with it the most careful consideration. Having an independent command in central Georgia with no free telegraph or other safe means of communication, I dared not try to reach Sherman on such an important matter as the flight of Davis with even a cipher message, and as I had no possible way of reaching either Grant or Stanton or of getting their instructions in time, I was forced to assume the entire responsibility. And this I did without the slightest delay or hesitation. The capture of Davis in southern Georgia within ten days proved that my information and conclusions were sufficiently correct to justify my action. The details have been

more or less confused by contemporaneous writers; in one case at least they were ridiculously exaggerated, but all the essential particulars of the flight and capture have been forever set at rest by Jefferson Davis himself.[1]

As the part taken in these events by the officers and men of my command not only ended the drama but made one of the most interesting chapters of modern history, I shall proceed to tell it exactly as it occurred. The records and contemporaneous publications afford abundant testimony upon all disputed points.

As soon as I got word of Johnston's capitulation on April 27, I directed Upton to proceed with an escort from his division, followed by Alexander's brigade, by rail to Augusta, which he reached on May 3. At the same time I ordered Winslow with the rest of the division to march as rapidly as possible to Atlanta, one hundred and fifty miles north, where they should take post for the purpose of carrying out the Sherman-Johnston Convention. Colonel Eggleston with the First Ohio was first to occupy that unfortunate city. As Eggleston was an experienced officer of discretion and judgment he was naturally assigned to command the post with instructions to send a strong detachment by rail southwest to West Point. Winslow reached Atlanta several days later, and from that time with Alexander, Noble, and Eggleston, kept watch and ward over every road in northern Georgia. Every officer and man was anxious to assist in the capture of Davis and his party, and had there been the slightest disposition to let

[1] "A Short History of the Confederate States," by Jefferson Davis, New York, Belford & Company, 1890, pp. 491 *et seq.*

up in the work Upton would not only have discovered it but would have taken radical measures to stimulate the vigilance and enterprise of those in fault. His position at Augusta on the northeastern boundary of the State, gave him an unusual opportunity to learn everything of importance taking place in the surrounding country. As he was both alert and full of expedients, he rendered most important service. He it was who suggested offering a reward of $500,000 for the capture of Davis before information reached us that the Secretary of War had denounced him with others for complicity in the assassination of Lincoln, and had based thereon an official offer of $100,000 for his apprehension. Upton had as yet no suspicion that Davis had participated in that crime, but like the rest of us he was anxious that the great chieftain, who had waged such a determined war for four years against the Union, should be captured and brought to trial. He, therefore, submitted his recommendation, and urged that it afforded a cheap way to end the war. He suggested that Davis would not travel blindly through the South, but would know his friends before reaching them, and that such a large reward would enlist thousands in his pursuit. As we had already received "grape-vine" reports that Davis had a large quantity of gold and other bank assets with him, it occurred to me that without assuming the risk of using the irascible Stanton's name or putting a price on Davis's head, I might properly offer a reward for his apprehension and delivery on the expressed condition that the reward should be paid out of the treasure captured with the fugitive. In view of the Secretary's stormy and arbitrary

temper even that action was rather bold for a subordinate, but I promptly wired Upton "to go ahead," giving him the assurance that we would "take the consequences together." Thus, it will be seen, our reward was offered before official authority reached us from Washington and not without the thought that it might possibly get us into trouble.[1] It is but just to the officers and men actually engaged in the pursuit of Davis to say, however, that not one of them ever heard of the actual offer till after the capture was made. I may add that, inasmuch as Davis had distributed his treasury gold to his followers before leaving Washington, Georgia, no part of it fell into the hands of his captors or was paid for his apprehension. On the other hand Stanton's offer was duly redeemed by an act of Congress appropriating the money which in turn was distributed according to the law of prize substantially as I had recommended.

Before his brigade left Macon, Alexander was authorized at his own request to send Lieutenant Joseph A. O. Yeoman, First Ohio Cavalry, brigade inspector, with twenty picked men disguised as "rebel soldiers" northeastward for the purpose of obtaining definite information of Davis's movements and of cutting him out and bringing him in as a prisoner of war if opportunity offered. With captured Confederate uniforms, these men would have been taken by the closest observer for a smart detachment of Confederate cavalry.

The other commanders were authorized to send out similar parties to both front and rear. By these

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, pp. 628-629, Stanton and Schofield; also, pp. 633-634, Upton and Wilson; also, p. 640, Stanton to Wilson.

means it was thought certain that all considerable bodies of rebel troops moving in military order would be duly discovered and that information would be got which would enable us to disperse them and to secure the principal leaders if they should try to pass through the country in any other way than as individual travelers or fugitives. With all the railroads in Georgia under my control and a division of four thousand national cavalry operating from Atlanta in all directions, it seemed highly improbable that any considerable body of fugitives could pass westward through northern Georgia by the ordinary roads, and as this narrative progresses it will become evident that Davis himself reached the same conclusion soon after crossing the Savannah River.

With the First and Second Divisions occupying Macon and sending out detachments in all directions and especially east, southeast, and southwest, that place had also become a center of vigilance and activity. In an incredibly short time every important road in the surrounding country as well as every ferry and crossing of the Ocmulgee and Oconee, flowing through the center and southeastern part of the state to the Altamaha and the Atlantic, was closely patroled and guarded. The same was true of the railways as well as of the bridges and ferries of the Flint and Chattahoochee to the west. Little by little it appeared likely that Davis would try to escape to the southward rather than to the westward, and hour by hour our efforts were increased to discover the road on which he was actually traveling. Rumors and false reports came in constantly. One day Davis was crossing the Chattahoochee in north-

ern Georgia, the next he was crossing the Appalachee near Madison. On the third he was reported as being near Covington on the Ocmulgee. But as it turned out all these reports were false. Davis, who left the railroad at Abbeville, South Carolina, had ridden through the country with his party, crossed the Savannah at Petersburg, where there was a pontoon bridge, and arrived at Washington in northeastern Georgia on the 3rd or 4th of May. Trustworthy news to this effect reached me on the 6th.

Fortunately, Yeoman's party, having started first and traveled rapidly in the direction whence it seemed most likely Davis would come, was first to send in accurate information. He had not only passed through northern Georgia but had joined Davis's party in South Carolina, and marched with him to Washington, seeking an opportunity to cut out and get away with him as a prisoner, but in this he was disappointed. It was easy enough for Yeoman and his small body of troopers to circulate up and down the column, made up as it was, of detachments from many different commands. Everybody was bent on saving himself, or at best on "going along down with the rest." Nobody suspected his chance neighbor of being a Yankee, but Davis naturally kept his own friends and acquaintances near by and, although but little formality and less state was observed, no one without special business could make an excuse for approaching him. The most Yeoman could do was to follow the column as part of it to Washington, but once there it disintegrated and he soon lost sight of Davis. Although he hung about and made cautious inquiries for a while, he

failed to learn Davis's actual lodging in the town, when he left, what direction he took, or by what road he traveled. He sent several couriers to the railroad to notify headquarters by wire what he had learned, but that was also slow and uncertain work, and the only definite information we actually got from him was that Davis had been at Washington and had disappeared. Yeoman, realizing that his own position was a perilous one, returned to the railroad and the next we heard of him he was on the way to Atlanta. Meanwhile, from the multiplicity of conflicting rumors and reports, and from the absence of anything certain except that Davis had been seen at Charlotte and been followed into Washington, and had gone south from that place with an escort, I concluded that he would try to make his way through the pine forests east of us to southwestern Georgia or to Florida and that if I started fresh detachments from Macon, one to march southeastwardly across country in the direction of Dublin on the Oconee and the other down the right bank of the Ocmulgee, one or the other would be likely to cross his trail. Accordingly, on the evening of May 6, I directed Croxton to select his best colonel and best regiment and send them to march as rapidly as possible by way of Jeffersonville to Dublin, posting small parties at the principal crossroads and sending others out still farther to the east after he reached Dublin. By these means I hoped to discover Davis's later movements, in which event the commanding officer was to follow the fugitives till they should be overtaken and captured. Under these instructions Croxton selected and started Colonel Harnden with the First Wisconsin at once.

That night and the next day my conviction that Davis would try to escape into Florida became so strengthened that I directed Minty, commanding the Second Division, also to select his best colonel and best regiment and send them with orders to follow the right or south bank of the Ocmulgee, watching all the crossings and ferries as far down as the mouth of the Ohoopee River. In case he crossed the trail of any important party he was directed to follow it to the Gulf of Mexico if necessary. For this purpose Minty detailed Lieutenant Colonel Pritchard with the Fourth Michigan Cavalry, and as both commanding officers were soldiers of the first quality and their men hardy veterans, neither lost any time in carrying out the instructions he had received.

My final dispositions may be summarized as follows: Upton with parts of two regiments was at Augusta watching the country in that vicinity and informing me by telegraph of every important circumstance which came under his observation. Winslow with the larger part of Upton's division occupied Atlanta scouting the country in all directions from that place. Alexander with five hundred picked men patroled the country north of the Chattahoochee toward Dalton, while smaller detachments occupied Griffin and Jonesborough, watching the crossings of the upper Ocmulgee and scouting the country to the eastward. Small detachments had also been sent to West Point and Columbus to watch the Alabama line in that quarter.

Croxton, commanding the main body of the First Division, had also sent a detachment to northeastern Alabama by way of Talladega and another through

northeastern Georgia toward North Carolina, while the rest of the division was watching the Ocmulgee from the right of Upton's line to Macon. Minty with the larger part of the Second Division, after detaching Pritchard, scouted the country on both sides of the river to the lower crossings of the Ocmulgee and had small parties at all the important points on the Southwestern Railroad and in western and southwestern Georgia, while McCook with a strong detachment at Albany and seven hundred men between that point and Tallahassee, Florida, was keenly on the lookout with the rest of the division for important fugitives. By now I also had telegraphic communication with Atlanta, Augusta, West Point, Columbus, Albany, Eufala, and Milledgeville, so that it seemed certain we should hear of and capture all important persons endeavoring to get out of the country.

In addition to these arrangements it must be remembered that Stoneman and Palmer, the latter belonging to Johnson's Sixth division, with strong columns had broken into North Carolina and were moving through that state toward the Georgia frontier, breaking the railroad and looking for the Confederate leaders.

By inspecting the map it will be seen that not less than fifteen thousand horsemen, counting Palmer's brigade, were occupying central and continuous lines from Kingston, Upper Georgia, to Florida, covering the whole country with detachments and scouts in all directions to the front and rear. When it is recalled that with the surrender of Johnston's army the conviction forced itself on the Confederate leaders still at large that the war was ended for-

ever and that Davis had lost his control of the Southern people, it will be recognized that Upton's suggestion of a reward for his capture was based on strong probabilities.

Let us now turn to Davis. While we knew he had been at Charlotte, Abbeville, and Washington, we did not know just when he got to those places. From his own "History of the Confederate States" it now appears that Lee late in March notified him that it might be necessary to abandon Petersburg and Richmond at an early day and to concentrate the Confederate forces, if possible, at Danville south of the Roanoke River. Neither at that time seems to have despaired of the Confederacy. It was then, doubtless, the intention of both to continue the war with their main armies and if those were broken up, to inaugurate a system of guerrilla warfare. The Confederate Congress had offered Lee the formal dictatorship but he had declined, and this circumstance allowed Davis to retain actual control to the end.

It will be recalled that Grant's army broke through the defenses of Petersburg on April 1-2, immediately after which Lee notified Davis that the evacuation would have to begin that night. It is now alleged that a forerunner of that notification reached him on the way to church, but the formal message was not handed to him till he took his seat in his pew. It also appears that he had been busy several days, selecting and packing the Confederate archives, and that when this work was finished, which was not till about midnight, Davis, his cabinet, and his family took train for Danville, which place they reached the next evening. They remained there till seven hours after Lee's surrender at Appomat-

tox on April 9, and then went on to Greensborough, where they became the guests of Colonel Moorehead for the 10th and 11th. At that place Davis held a council with Generals Johnston, Beauregard, and Breckenridge, and with Benjamin, Mallory, Reagan, and George Davis of his cabinet on April 12 for the purpose of deciding on the policy of the Confederacy for the immediate future. It was at this council that he made an eloquent and impassioned speech, by which he endeavored to convince his hearers that all was not lost. Although he doubtless knew that Selma had fallen and that Montgomery and Columbus were in danger, he contended that they could still make head against the Union army, and if it came to the worst could unite a large force composed of Johnston's, Taylor's, Beauregard's, Maury's, and Forrest's troops in western Alabama. He claimed that if this army, thus organized, should be overborne, a large part of it could make its way to the trans-Mississippi Department and there continue the war indefinitely. Although he received but little encouragement from the council it is evident that he had not yet given up all hope.

While at Charlotte, where he arrived on April 18, he reluctantly authorized Johnston to open negotiations with Sherman for an arrangement by which peace should be concluded. Some writers allege that he drafted with his own hands the terms finally agreed upon; others declare that the draft was made by Breckenridge, his secretary of war, but without reference to the real author of the scheme, it is sufficient to state that Sherman accepted it and reported it to his superiors for ratification, that Stanton, the national secretary of war, promptly re-

pudiated it, and that Sherman in accordance with instructions thereupon gave forty-eight hours' notice that the armistice would terminate at noon April 27.

Davis seems to have remained at Charlotte till that day, although he claims that he did not hear that the termination of the armistice was followed at once by the surrender of Johnston with all the Confederate forces east of the Chattahoochee River on terms substantially the same as those granted to Lee and his army.[1] Be this as it may, it is now certain that Davis left Charlotte on April 27 and by short marches with two intervals of a half day each, reached Abbeville, South Carolina, May 3. Mrs. Davis and family had already arrived at Washington some fifty miles to the southwest under the escort of Burton Harrison, but had notified Davis by letter which reached him the same day, of her intention to make her way to Pensacola by traveling through the country to the south between Macon and Augusta.

Disturbed by this information, Davis pushed on at once, crossing the Savannah at Petersburg on the morning of May 4, and arriving at the town of Washington the same night. It was from that place that Yeoman sent in his first information, and it was there also that Davis first heard of Upton's occupation of Augusta.

Admonished by his proximity to our forces and hearing that the country was full of marauding detachments, mostly Confederates going home, he distributed the treasury gold and silver to the troops who had not yet disbanded, and started early on the

[1] O. R. Serial No. 97, pp. 1390-91.

morning of the 6th through Laurens and Dodge Counties to the south. His escort, consisting of five small cavalry brigades, deserted him at Washington, though General Basil Duke and Colonel Breckenridge marched westward to Woodstock to cover his movements. Benjamin and Mallory left him before getting to Washington while Breckenridge and Reagan continued with Davis to that place. From Washington, with a volunteer escort of only ten or twelve men and no encumbrance but a light wagon, he soon caught up with Mrs. Davis and her party. From this reunion, which doubtless occurred on the 7th, they traveled together till the entire party was captured near Irwinville, the county seat of Irwin County, three days later.

It is worthy of note, however, that Davis to the time of his death declared that while it was his purpose to send his wife to Pensacola, it was his own intention to pass around or through my main line, and across the lower Chattahoochee, into southern Alabama, and then to continue his journey to a junction with Taylor, Maury, and Forrest. His narrative shows that he conformed to that plan from the time he crossed the Oconee River near Dublin till he was captured considerably out of the course by which Breckenridge and Benjamin reached the coast of Florida and finally escaped from the country. Davis rode about one hundred and thirty miles as the crow flies from Washington to Irwinville, but taking into account the crooked roads the distance was from one hundred and forty-five to one hundred and fifty-five miles, which he made in four days or at the average rate of something less than forty miles a day. Considering his indistinct

route and the encumbrance of the family train, this must be considered as good speed.

But to return to Harnden and the pursuit. That sturdy veteran realizing that he was out for a long chase, selected only three officers and one hundred and fifty men with the best horses. When they were drawn out and inspected for the march he briefly explained in his own rough way that they had been chosen to go in pursuit of Davis, whose escort would probably outnumber them and would certainly fight to the death, but as the First Wisconsin had never been whipped yet, he did not expect them to be whipped now no matter how many rebels they might encounter. Receiving this speech with cheers, they took the road late in the evening of May 6. Marching southeastwardly all night by forest roads, they reached Jeffersonville about daylight the next morning. Leaving there an officer and thirty men with orders to scout the country in all directions for reliable information of Davis and his party, the remainder, now reduced to one hundred and twenty, pushed on without halting to Dublin, a poor little town on the west bank of the Oconee, which they reached at seven o'clock that evening. They covered something over fifty miles in twenty-four hours. Harnden sent out scouting parties all day to the right in pursuit of small detachments which in every case proved to be paroled men from Johnston's army on their way home. On arriving at Dublin, he found the white people somewhat excited by his presence, but after assuring them that he was establishing a courier line between Macon and Savannah, he went into bivouac between the town and the river and settled himself apparently for the night. The leading

gentlemen of the place affected entire ignorance if not indifference to the movements of Davis and other important rebels, but were unusually profuse in their offers of hospitality to the grim old colonel. As this was a trait of Southern character he had seen but little of as yet, it naturally aroused his suspicion, and this was strengthened by commotion amongst the negroes.

The town was full of Confederate officers in uniform, and their sullen looks indicated no friendship to the Yankee colonel or his detachment. Shortly after going into bivouac he got an intimation that a party with wagons had crossed the ferry from the east side that day, and after some delay "had gone south on the river road," but his questions in regard to the party were evaded, or if answered, the answers were in terms intended to avert suspicion or to put him on the wrong scent. The most he could be sure of after all his inquiry was that a considerable party had arrived there about noon and had gone on south.

Having been twenty-four hours in the saddle and thirty-six without sleep, Harnden turned in for rest as soon as his arrangements were complete, but had hardly struck his blankets when his body servant, an ex-slave left behind by Bragg when Rosecrans drove him from Tennessee, called him up with a whispered word that he had found an old colored man who could give him the information he was looking for. Carefully questioning both men, the colonel soon satisfied himself that "President Davis" and "Mrs. Davis" had been in town that day; that they had arranged to take dinner with a local judge and were about seating themselves when

information came which caused them to start without eating, and that they had gone south with their entire party. The colored man also said that another party with horses and wagons had come to the landing but, instead of crossing, had gone on down the river to a lower ferry. He thought the two parties had joined each other in the town and had been traveling together, but was not certain. This was confusing, but with the hope of getting more exact information he went to the ferry with two men and called out the ferryman, whom he questioned closely, but found him so obstinate, stupid, or ignorant that he could get nothing confirmatory from him. Convinced, however, that it was his duty to follow the united party now fully twelve hours on its way, he returned to the bivouac, called out his half-rested men and took the road again in pursuit. The detachment left behind on the Macon road had not yet come in, and it was necessary under his instruction to occupy Dublin and scout the country up and down the river as well as to the eastward. He, therefore, told off Lieutenant Lane with forty-five men for that purpose, and with the remaining seventy-five started by the road which he supposed the party had taken. Unfortunately, it was still dark as midnight and as the roads through the pine woods of that region were mere trails, difficult to follow in the daytime and impossible to follow at night, he had great difficulty in getting straightened out in the right direction. Indeed, his little column wandered about in uncertainty for some time and finally found itself, as day began to break, again in the edge of the town. With coming dawn it readily got off on the right road, but at the end of the first five miles, it halted a few minutes

at Turkey Creek where the bridge had been torn up. While the men were replacing the planking, the colonel learned at a house near by that a party with wagons had passed that way the evening before and that two of the men had stopped to get some milk. One of them dropped a scrap of newspaper which had a late Richmond date on it. A bright little girl of the house had heard one of the gentlemen call the other "Colonel Harrison," who in turn addressed the first as "Mr. President." From further inquiry, it appeared, both were well dressed and neither had shoulder straps, but one had stars on his collar and gold braid on his sleeves, while the others had no noticeable marks about them, though "their clothes were not like the colonel's." The information, however, when put together, convinced Harnden that he was now on the track of Jefferson Davis, and in this conviction he sent a courier to me with a dispatch to that effect; but the courier was captured on his way to Macon, robbed of his horse and equipments, and compelled to make his way to that place on foot, and he did not get through till after the colonel and his companions had returned from Irwinville.

Having repaired the bridge at Turkey Creek with but little lost time, Harnden pushed on again, following the wagon tracks, which could be plainly seen for a while, but a heavy rain setting in soon obliterated them. Still the column continued its march, sending out encircling parties in the hope of finding the trail again, but in this they were unsuccessful. One, however, brought in a countryman riding a fine horse and claiming to be hunting sheep. He strenuously denied all knowledge of the party that Harn-

den was pursuing, but the colonel threatening to take his horse and compel him to march on foot, extorted a confession that he did know where the party had spent the night before. Closely guarded by two men, he guided the column in a southwesterly direction to a poor plantation where the fugitives had rested over night. Here the column got forage for their hungry horses, and while the owner stoutly declared that he did not know where or in what direction the fugitives had gone, he finally admitted that they might have continued their march southwestward across Gum Swamp, but followed this with the declaration that the heavy rain had so raised the water that it would be impossible for the pursuing column to find its way through it.

By no means discouraged, the colonel ordered the countryman to get his horse and guide the column through the swamp to the dry land beyond and accompanied this order with the stern admonition that if he did not lead the column safely through, he and his men would return and eat him out of house and home. As this threat brought him face to face with a very real danger, he hesitated no longer but guided the column for several miles safely through water much of the time up to the saddle skirts. This was a long and weary day, but the Union horsemen, without flagging, continued the pursuit by a fairly plain path threading the dense pine forest almost devoid of settlements and supplies, in a southwesterly direction till darkness compelled them to halt for the night. Finding but little food for man or beast, and no shelter for either, they made themselves as comfortable as they could by huge camp fires of pine logs, but their rest about midnight was rudely broken by

a terrible storm of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning which blew down several forest trees near by and so saturated the ground that none but veteran cavalrymen could have got the slightest relief from fatigue because of the discomfort of the bivouac.

Up and on the path again before daylight of the 9th, they pushed forward as rapidly as possible till they reached the Ocmulgee River, which they had crossed first at Macon, nearly a hundred miles to the northwest. They had made almost a circle, but finding no means of crossing they continued down the left bank till they came to Brown's Ferry. Here they found an old flat boat which they overloaded in their anxiety to cross quickly, and the restive horses kicked loose one of the bottom planks on the upward curve of the bow, so that the boat took water rapidly. This made it necessary to carry half loads afterward, which in turn prolonged the passage two hours, but the delay gave Harnden the opportunity of learning that the party he was pursuing had crossed the river that day only a few hours ahead of him. As soon as his men were all over, he followed the river for an hour to the little town of Abbeville, where he halted to feed and rest. Here inquiry elicited the information that a party with wagons had passed through the town that day, going toward Irwinville, some twenty-five miles farther south. He now had no doubt that he was within reach of the party he had been pursuing for three days, but decided not to close in on it till after dark. Having fed his horses and refreshed his men, he again took the road, but just as he was moving out, he met four soldiers coming from the north. As it turned out, they were the advance of the Fourth

Michigan Cavalry, under Lieutenant Colonel Pritchard, near at hand.

It will be remembered that Pritchard had left Macon the day after Harnden had started to Dublin. He had marched rapidly, leaving detachments at all the important crossings, and was now approaching the lower bends of the river to which his attention had been particularly directed. It was about the middle of the afternoon. Without halting his own column, Harnden rode back to meet Pritchard, to whom, as they were engaged in a common enterprise, he gave all the information he had gathered in his three days' pursuit, and this was most important for Pritchard, who had a larger and fresher command, but who as yet had learned nothing from any other source as to Davis's movements. After declining reënforcements, Harnden rejoined his own column near the spot where Davis and his party had halted for luncheon and left their camp fire still burning. This, of course, encouraged and quickened Harnden's march till night, when he found himself in a swale of the forest containing both water and grass, and accordingly halted to rest and graze his horses. Neither he nor his men had had anything to eat except a small supply of damaged corn meal, but withal they made a cheerful and hopeful bivouac till nearly daybreak in the confident belief that they were but a short distance from the party they were following.

Meanwhile, Pritchard continued his march by the river road to the left for several miles, when he met a negro, from whom he obtained information confirmatory of the information that Harnden had given him an hour before. It removed all doubt that the party Harnden had been pursuing was really that

of the Confederate President, and that it was also his duty to join in the pursuit. In this he was clearly right, and had he acted otherwise he would have been censurable for negligence and want of enterprise. It should not be forgotten that he and Harnden were lieutenant colonels of different regiments from different states belonging to different brigades and different divisions. They had probably never met before, and were, therefore, comparative strangers. Had they continued together it would have been necessary to compare commissions in order that the senior might properly assume command of the joint forces. But as they were acting under separate and distinct orders, they parted with the understanding that Harnden would continue the pursuit on the direct route while Pritchard would follow the river indefinitely or till he found something further to justify his leaving it. This was the condition when the latter got the negro's later information which caused him to change his plan, and the only mistake he made after that was that having decided to join in the pursuit he should have sent a courier to notify Harnden and especially to caution him to look out for the Michigan men on the first road farther south running toward Irwinville. For some reason never clearly explained he failed to take this precaution, and although it will appear later that the consequences were unfortunate and directly due to this failure, I have never thought that Pritchard's conduct was censurable for the reason that it was probably an oversight which might have occurred to any vigorous and zealous officer in the heat and anxiety of the hour. While proper cooperation would certainly have prevented mistakes

and accidents, it could scarcely be foreseen that the converging columns would come together in the dark at Davis's camp, or that a collision would take place near it during the night.

In order to march as rapidly as possible, Pritchard took only seven officers and one hundred and twenty-eight men, selecting his best troopers and strongest horses, and at four o'clock in the afternoon of May 9, started by a roundabout road through Bowenville toward the county seat of Irwin County. He had nearly thirty miles to go, or from ten to twelve miles more than Harnden, in order to reach a common junction point. Leaving the remainder of his men under Captain Hathaway with orders to picket the crossings and continue the march in compliance with the original instructions, Pritchard took the first right-hand road at as rapid a gait as he could maintain, following it without drawing rein till his advance under Captain Hudson found itself in the vicinity of Irwinville. The situation was now an exciting one, and yet neither colonel was conscious of the other's exact position or what he was doing. Pritchard's road brought him into the sleeping village at one o'clock in the morning of May 10, and although he and his men naturally made as little noise as possible, the women and children soon discovered their presence and became greatly excited. Restoring quiet by the assurance that his column was the rear guard of the rebel President's escort, he was gratified to learn that the party he was looking for had encamped that night about a mile and a half north of the village on the Abbeville road. With this important information, guided by a negro, the column with Hudson in front now moved

noiselessly northward till within a short distance of the camp.

There the colonel detached Lieutenant Purinton and twenty-five troopers to make their way through the woods as silently as possible to the Abbeville road north of the camp for the purpose of cutting off all chance of escape, and with the hope that they might also interpose between the party and its escort. As a necessary precaution he directed Purinton in case of alarm or discovery to close in on the camp from wherever he might be at the time, while the remainder of the command would charge the camp along the main road.

These preliminaries having been successfully carried into effect without disturbance, Pritchard moved a few minutes later undiscovered to within a few rods of the camp, where he patiently waited against the protest of one of his officers for the first appearance of dawn, confident that no one could get away undiscovered and that the chances of complete success would be more certain by daylight.

Meanwhile Harnden, who had started as soon as it was light enough to see, after a march of "a mile or two," found himself in front of a detachment which opened fire upon him. From the rattle of the carbines he estimated this party at from twenty to thirty and, assuming naturally enough that they belonged to Davis's escort, he promptly dismounted a part of his force to fight on foot while he started the remainder on a turning movement through the woods. A sharp skirmish followed in which two men were killed, and one officer and three men severely wounded before either party discovered that it was fighting Union men instead of Confederates.

Whether the noise of the unfortunate engagement preceded Pritchard's dash or whether his movement against the camp which had been timed for dawn merely happened to be simultaneous with Harnden's cannot be positively stated, but Pritchard after surrounding the camp and leaving it in charge of his adjutant, like the true soldier he was, rode at once toward the firing, where he and Harnden shortly encountered each other riding from opposite directions. Both were greatly surprised, but the increasing light and the hasty explanations which followed soon cleared up the immediate situation and left the colonels free to ride back together to a scene of a much greater importance.

Without regard to the antecedent facts resulting in the unfortunate skirmish, as well as in a lifelong estrangement between the commanders, it is certain that the firing up the road aroused Davis and his party just as the Michigan men were closing around the camp. Captain Hudson with a sergeant claimed to be the first man to ride up to the central tent in the camp, and was about to dismount when he saw a woman *en déshabillé* through the opening of the tent front who asked him not to intrude upon the privacy of ladies, but to give them time to dress. As she followed this with the declaration that there was no one but ladies in the tent, and that it belonged to "Mr. Smith and his friends," he was about to grant her request, but just at that moment he also heard sharp firing up the road and, leaving a trooper to guard the tent, he rejoined his detachment and hastened to the fighting line.

This brings us to the actual capture of Jefferson Davis and his party a few minutes later by men

operating under the immediate direction of Lieutenant Julian G. Dickinson, adjutant of the Fourth Michigan. In compliance with Pritchard's orders, that officer, after taking the necessary precautions for the security of the captured camp and sending forward several men who had straggled, was about starting to join the colonel when his attention was called "to three persons dressed in female attire" who were apparently just leaving the tent and were moving toward the thick woods near by. Turning his horse toward them, he sang out: "Halt!" but as this failed to stop them, he repeated the command in a more imperative tone, which drew Corporal Munger and three men from the cordon about the camp, with carbines advanced. This brought the party promptly to a standstill. In the fright and confusion which followed it became evident that one of the party was Mr. Davis in disguise, and that the others were Mrs. Davis and her sister, Miss Howell.

At this juncture, before any persons had reëntered the tent, Pritchard and Harnden, returning from the front, rode up to the group which had now become the center of interest. Davis, who had been permitted to throw off his disguise, was still somewhat excited, but, recognizing the officers, turned fiercely upon them and asked which of them was in command. As will be remembered, they had never compared dates of commissions, so they were momentarily at a loss, if not somewhat disconcerted, by the imperious question of their prisoner. Exactly what followed has been variously told by the officers present, but it seems clear that Colonel Pritchard, who was a man of self-possession, replied substantially as follows: "I am Lieutenant Colonel Pritch-

ard, commanding the Fourth Michigan, and this is Lieutenant Colonel Harnden, commanding the First Wisconsin Cavalry. We belong to different brigades and different divisions, and do not know who holds the older commission, but that is not important, for between us we shall doubtless be able to take care of you and your party."

Corporal Munger later claimed to have been the first to recognize Davis under his disguise by his boots and spurs, while Colonel Harnden, in his account of the capture, says that John H. Reagan, Confederate postmaster general, was the first man he and Pritchard saw, and that Reagan pointed out Davis to them, whereupon they rode up, dismounted, and after saluting asked the person indicated if he was Mr. Davis. To this he replied: "Yes; I am President Davis." Harnden adds that up to that minute no one actually engaged in the arrest knew certainly that their principal prisoner was the person they were looking for.

On counting the captured party, it was found that it consisted of Mr. Davis, Mr. Reagan, postmaster general, Colonel Burton N. Harrison, private secretary, Colonels Johnson and Lubbock, aids-de-camp, four younger officers and thirteen private soldiers, besides Mrs. Davis, Miss Howell, her sister, two maid servants, four children, and several colored servants and teamsters. One of the party, a private soldier, in the confusion succeeded in slipping into the woods and getting away.

As both Harnden and Pritchard had been notified before starting that Davis was escorted by a party variously reported at from ten to fifty picked men, who would probably make a desperate fight, they had

fully made up their minds to take him dead or alive, and this doubtless accounts for the sharpness of the fight between the Wisconsin and Michigan men.

The women and children were carried by two army ambulances, while six army wagons carried the baggage and personal effects of the party.

News of the capture reached me two days later by Pritchard's written report to Minty, who in turn brought it to me at the Lanier House. On entering my office, this natty and dashing officer, hastily saluting, called out in an exultant tone: "General, we have captured Jeff Davis and, by jingo, we got him in his wife's clothes!"

Minty's first words brought me instantly to my feet, but those which followed and the manner of their delivery suggested that Minty might be treating the subject with untimely levity, whereupon I replied: "General, that is most important news, but I trust there is no mistake about it." It flashed through my mind that Davis's capture would be hailed throughout the North as the end of the Rebellion, and that if he were really caught in his wife's clothes it would overwhelm him and the Confederate cause alike with ridicule. The severity of my manner was instantly followed by a serious expression on the part of Minty, who said: "It's all right, General; here is Pritchard's dispatch by a special courier." Harnden himself, sad with disappointment that the actual capture had been made by another, appeared shortly afterward and not only confirmed Pritchard's report, but gave the details substantially as set forth in this narrative.

The next day Pritchard arrived with Davis and his party, and it was on the authority of the verbal

but official statements submitted by Pritchard and Harnden that my preliminary reports were made to those in authority at Washington. In the haste and excitement of the great event but few formal reports, and they of the most general character, were ever written. Months and even years afterward several narratives, giving more or less of the details, were published in the newspapers and magazines, but they lacked the character of official documents.

Of course, I sent off my first dispatch on the strength of the information brought in by Minty, saying amongst other things that Davis was captured "in his wife's clothes," which was literally the fact.

Although both officers and men declared that when arrested Davis was endeavoring to escape in disguise, I gave no details and specified no particular articles of clothing. My report, however, was instantly flashed to all parts of the country as well as to all parts of Europe. It was published everywhere in the newspapers and illustrated journals with details and amplifications from the imagination of the writers and artists who commented upon the event and supplied details according to their own fancy. So far as I know no officer ever asserted that the Confederate chief was caught in crinoline or petticoats as worn in those days, and yet his friends everywhere hastened to deny the allegation as published in the newspapers, and many went so far as to declare that Davis was not disguised at all and that the whole story was a tissue of falsehoods.

It will not be forgotten that the country was at that time hung in black and overwhelmed with sorrow for the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, and that

so long as the Confederate chiefs were at large, threatening to carry on the war more fiercely than ever, there could be no assurance of peace. But when the news that Jefferson Davis had not died "in the last ditch," but had been caught trying to get away in woman's clothing, it was evident to all that the war was ended completely and forever. The illustrated journals made this more certain than ever by depicting the disconsolate chieftain, seated at the edge of "the last ditch" with his dress drawn up over a hoop skirt, revealing a pair of cavalry boots and spurs. That picture without reference to its literal truth was also republished throughout the world, and did quite as much as all the regular reports and narratives together to restore public confidence and to bring back to the faces of the people the smiles which had vanished from them when they heard of the wicked and senseless assassination of Lincoln three weeks before at Washington.

The precise articles of Davis's disguise were a lady's waterproof cloak, buttoning down in front, and known in those days as an "aquascutum," which he doubtless put on at the instance of his wife. In addition, he wore a small, black, long shawl, with a colored, cross border, wrapped about his neck and over his soft felt hat. To the ordinary soldier the "waterproof" looked exactly like a woman's coarse gown for rough weather, and while put on over an ordinary suit of Confederate gray, it was certainly intended as a disguise by Davis and his wife, and was so taken by those who saw it on him. If it had proved successful and Davis had escaped by its use, his friends would doubtless have fully justified its use. The dress and shawl were delivered to Colonel

Pritchard and by him turned over to the Adjutant General at the War Department, where they can doubtless be inspected by such as are curious to know their exact form and construction. All the incidents of the pursuit and capture, including a description of the disguise in which Davis had attempted to escape, will be found fully described in the official records,[1] in "Annals of the War,"[2] in the *Century Magazine*,[3] in "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War,"[4] in "Colonial Harnden's Narrative,"[5] in the Pamphlet of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Greeno, Seventh Pennsylvania Cavalry,[6] in Jefferson Davis's "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government,"[7] and finally in Davis's "Short History of the Confederate States."[8] In one form or another, each of these publications fully confirms the story of the disguise as given above.

It can hardly be necessary to call further attention to the fact that I was not personally present at the capture of Davis and, therefore, did not see him till he arrived at my headquarters at Macon in the afternoon of May 13. I never saw the disguise and all that I have related is consequently based upon

[1] O. R. Serial No. 103, pp. 370, *et seq.*

[2] "Annals of the War," Philadelphia Times Pub. Co., 1879, pp. 554 *et seq.*

[3] *Century Magazine*, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 386 *et seq.*

[4] *Century Magazine*, Vol. LV, pp. 759 *et seq.*

[5] "Capture of Jefferson Davis," &c., by Henry Harnden, Madison, Wis., 1898.

[6] "The Capture of Jefferson Davis, and What I Know of It," by Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Greeno.

[7] Davis's "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," pp. 71-2.

[8] Davis's "Short History of the Confederate States," Belford Company, New York, 1890, pp. 491 *et seq.*

verbal and official reports and the statements of the various participants in the events of the time, and yet I have no doubt that I have given the truth with accuracy just as it occurred.

As Davis and his escort were on the way to my headquarters they found the streets of Macon crowded with men and women who had supported or sympathized with the Confederacy, but not a single one of whom gave them a kindly greeting or a word of recognition. While Davis and his party were closely guarded no one was prohibited from showing them personal respect or from offering them a friendly salutation. From the fact that all stood silent I have never doubted that from that time at least Davis had lost most of his popularity in that community. Neither then nor afterward while at Macon did a single Confederate leader or a single personal friend make inquiry in regard to him. Not one soul showed the slightest interest in his behalf while he remained at that place.

Of course, I received and treated the Confederate President with every courtesy and consideration, assigning him and his party the best rooms in the hotel and, as soon as they had refreshed themselves, I directed my own steward and servants to give the tired and hungry travelers the best dinner the resources of the hotel and the town could supply. It is pleasant to add that they ate as heartily and with as much freedom from annoyance as if they had been my personal friends and honored guests.

Shortly after dinner I received Mr. Davis in my official apartment and conversed with him till his train was ready to start, which was set for five o'clock that afternoon.

Mr. Davis called alone and without escort, and we had an informal and friendly interview lasting something over an hour. He looked bronzed and somewhat careworn, but hardy and vigorous, and during the conversation behaved with perfect self-possession and dignity. However petulant he may have been at the time of his capture and during his march to Macon, he had entirely recovered his equanimity. While I had seen him before at West Point both as secretary of war and as senator from Mississippi, I had never been presented to him, but my classmate, John M. Wilson, knew him well and had met Mrs. Davis frequently. From that circumstance both of them evidently expected to meet an old friend, but Mr. Davis, seeing at a glance that I was another man, turned the conversation without embarrassment to West Point and our common recollections connected therewith.

He asked kindly about the old professors, especially Mahan, Bartlett, and Church, commenting upon their peculiarities with good feeling and critical discrimination. This naturally led to the consideration of graduates who had become leading generals on the opposing sides. He spoke both freely and feelingly of Lee's character and deeds, declaring him to be the ablest, most courageous, and most aggressive, as well as the best beloved of all of his generals. On the expression of some surprise at his ascription of an aggressive temper to Lee, he not only repeated his high praise but went on to say that Lee was the only Confederate commander of the first rank whose aggressiveness amounted to rashness, and whose bold advice and policies he had felt compelled more than once to restrain. He also com-

mended Bragg, Hardee, Taylor, and several others for high qualities and leadership, but, as might have been expected, he spoke slightingly of Johnston, charging him with timidity and insubordination. He condemned Beauregard's military pedantry and deprecated Hood's heroic rashness.

On the other hand he expressed surprise at Grant's skill and persistency, admiration for Sherman's brilliancy, and respect for Thomas's solid qualities. He did not hesitate to say that he had expected more from McClellan, Buell, and Fitz-John Porter than they had performed. His comments and criticisms were clothed in excellent language and delivered with felicity and grace, while his manners were stately and dignified without being frigid or repellent.

During our conversation, without the slightest suggestion on my part, he referred to Mr. Lincoln and his untimely death. Speaking of him and his public services in terms of respect and kindness, he seemed to regard the martyred president as having been a worthy if not a brilliant member of Congress and a conscientious president. He did not hesitate to express his sorrow that a man of so much sensibility and kindliness had been succeeded in the presidency by Andrew Johnson, for whom he made but little if any effort to conceal his dislike, and whom he seemed to fear would be governed by a vindictive and unforgiving temper toward the Southern people.

He voluntarily alluded to the reward offered for his arrest and which he heard of for the first time on the road from Irwinville to Macon, declaring with modest language and bearing that while he was

both surprised and pained at the charge of complicity in the assassination of the President he solemnly asserted that it gave him no serious apprehension. In connection with this subject he added: "I have no doubt, General, the Government of the United States will bring a much more serious charge against me than that, and one which will give me much greater trouble to disprove." Of course I understood this as an allusion to his well-known public actions in connection with secession and the war against the Union.

His conduct throughout the interview was in every way natural and self-possessed and, as far as I could discover, did not reveal the slightest uneasiness or apprehension. It gave me the impression that, although he was the fallen chief of the Confederacy who had lost and become a prisoner of war, he still felt that he would in some way remain an important factor in the political reconstruction of the Union.

In the midst of our interview he sent for his intelligent and manly little son, Jefferson, and politely introduced him to me. This boy grew to manhood, but had hardly started in life when he died of yellow fever in the epidemic which prevailed at Memphis and on the lower Mississippi some years later.

I did not meet either Mrs. Davis or Miss Howell. As reported to me by Colonel Pritchard, Mrs. Davis, womanlike, in her deep distress and anxiety, had taken some slight comfort in the thought that she would find me an old acquaintance in the person of my classmate, Jack Wilson. That it was not so was doubtless a disappointment to her. She did not, however, ask to meet me and I so far respected her

wishes and those of Miss Howell as not to ask to be presented to them. Of course, every proper attention was paid to their comfort, and I am sure no due or becoming courtesy was omitted either by Colonel Pritchard or by any of my officers or by myself.

After touching on the various subjects alluded to in this narrative, I informed Mr. Davis that he was to be sent that afternoon, when ready, by the way of Atlanta and Augusta to Savannah and thence by sea to such point north as the Secretary of War might designate. At this he expressed no surprise, but as he was about to take leave, he said: "I suppose, of course, Colonel Pritchard will be my custodian hereafter as heretofore, and I wish to express my satisfaction at this arrangement, for it is both my duty and my pleasure to say that Colonel Pritchard has treated me with marked courtesy and consideration. I have no fault to find with him and beg you to tell him so. I should do it myself but for fear it might be regarded as a prisoner's effort to make fair weather with his captor." He seemed to be specially impressed by the Colonel's dignity and self-possession and intimated a regret that he had not been more fortunate in his own conduct at the time of his capture and during his march to Macon. In the first instance he doubtless alluded to his loss of temper, and in the second to the fact that he spoke sharply and imperiously to the officers and men whose duty it was not only to make sure of his safety, but to see that he should have no chance to escape.

For the purpose of cutting off all hope of rescue, I sent Mr. Davis and his party by the train leaving at five o'clock for Atlanta and Augusta in personal

charge of Colonel Pritchard with twenty picked men, escorted by eight hundred men carried on two trains, one preceding and one following the train carrying the prisoners. As far as I knew there was not a single man and still less a single military organization in Georgia, although the State was full of disbanded Confederates, which would have dared to undertake his release, but it was clearly my duty to see that every precaution was taken to make that impossible.

The party passed safely over the road and, although it was before the era of sleeping cars, reached Augusta the next day in fairly good condition. General Upton, who had been duly instructed, was on the lookout, and transferred them on arrival to a river steamer with every possible provision for their comfort. Under orders from Washington he had also arrested Alexander H. Stevens, vice-president of the Confederacy. As was well known at the time that distinguished statesman was not on good terms with Davis, for which reason Mr. Stevens expressed the hope that they would not be brought in contact. For this reason Upton gave instructions to keep them apart while they were on the steamboat. They were also accompanied by Mr. Mallory, the Confederate secretary of the navy, Mr. Reagan, postmaster general, Mr. Hill, a Confederate senator for Georgia, and Mr. Clement C. Clay, who had surrendered himself a few days before. General Joe Wheeler and staff also accompanied the party. They had been arrested at Conyer Station, near Atlanta, by a detachment of Palmer's brigade, while trying to make their way to the trans-Mississippi. Wheeler had a forged parole with which he tried to pass him-

self off as Lieutenant Sharp. His conduct appeared highly suspicious, and while he did not deny the forged parole, he protested that he was not trying to escape. But, withal, his prevarication and irresponsible talk were such as to convince Palmer that he should be deprived of his liberty and sent up for such action as the Washington authorities might choose to take. Both Upton and I had known Wheeler well as a cadet and, while we regarded him in no way as a dangerous opponent, it had always been a mystery to us that he should have reached such high rank and command in the Confederate service. Upton, probably as much to get rid of him as for any other reason, sent him with Davis's party. He, of course, made his companions believe that he was a martyr to the Lost Cause, and his belief, I regret to add, was strengthened by his transfer with the rest to the gun-boat which conveyed the party from Savannah to Hampton Roads. Without further details, it will be remembered that Davis was separated at that place from his family and his friends and then imprisoned at Fortress Monroe. May 22, 1865.

While it has been frequently contended that it would have been better to "build a bridge of gold" over which Davis might escape, it must not be forgotten that the assassination of President Lincoln had changed the feeling of the country from one of indifference to one of intense anxiety that the leaders of the Confederacy, as well as all persons who might have been engaged in that wicked and unfeeling crime, should be arrested and brought to punishment. And it was doubtless as the exponent of that feeling that the Secretary of War took such an

intense interest in the pursuit and capture and the safe transportation and imprisonment of Davis. Both Stanton and President Johnson were accused of vindictive feelings toward him. In common with most military men I supposed that Davis would at least be tried by a military commission for levying war against the United States, but from the fact that he was never brought to trial before either a military or a civil court, it cannot be successfully contended that he was vindictively treated, although confined in a casemate with irons on his wrists. The most that can be said against that treatment is that it was foolish and unnecessary. While it is true that every effort was made for the next six months to find proof connecting Davis with the plot to assassinate the President and his cabinet, all efforts in that direction finally failed, and the charge was properly dismissed along with all other charges against the great prisoner. After nearly half a century in the full light of every fact disclosed, it does not appear that there was ever the slightest justification even for the suspicion that Mr. Davis had either personal or official knowledge or responsibility for the wild and dastardly plot to murder his great contemporary. That he was not only permitted in the end to go free, but to die of old age in peace, redounds to the glory of our common country as well as to the moderation if not to the magnanimity of both Stanton and Johnson. Both were at times foolish and arbitrary, but neither was a corrupt or a wicked man.

As before stated, the capture of Davis and his family, following, as it did, the capture and destruction of the last Confederate arsenal, storehouse, and

stronghold and the disbandment and parole of the last Confederate army, made peace not only certain but effective and permanent. Our task was done and done well, and it remained but to retain only enough troops to keep order in Georgia.

# X

## RECONSTRUCTION

Winslow rebuilds railroad from Atlanta to Dalton—President's message—Governor Brown of Georgia—Reconstruction policy—Conference with Brown—Attitude of the churches—General Cobb's letter—The South—Mustering out of cavalry corps—Career of officers of Cavalry Corps—Letter to Sherman—Andersonville Prison—Meeting with Grant.

Having captured and disposed of the principal civil officers connected with the Confederate Government, the cavalry corps was concentrated as before, two divisions at Macon and one at Atlanta, but while the concentration was going on many other matters engaged my attention.

I had kept Stanton, Grant, Thomas, Schofield, Gillmore, and Canby daily informed of what was going on in Georgia, but the mails and telegraphs were badly disarranged and their service was generally far behind the events referred to. All the reports and dispatches will, however, be found fully set forth in the Official Records.[1] They epitomize a short but interesting period of history, but as I have summarized the military events, I shall confine myself henceforth to such civil matters as seem particularly important.

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, pp. 628 *et seq.*

I was without experience to guide me through the complications which followed the collapse of the Southern governments both confederate and state, and yet, having recently reread all the correspondence and considered all the events in which I exercised a controlling influence, it is a matter of supreme satisfaction that I find neither word nor deed of mine that I should care to change.

My first care after arriving at Macon was to subsist my command without inflicting unnecessary want or injury on the people by which we were surrounded. Efforts were made to send supplies to me by way of the rivers bounding or penetrating the state, but all such efforts proved inadequate or abortive. Sherman intimated that I should send the entire corps, except a few veteran regiments to keep order, to the Tennessee River, but, as the intervening country was poor and thinly settled, and had already been stripped of its supplies, I regarded that suggestion as impracticable. As far as I could see there was nothing for us but to rebuild and reopen the railroad from Atlanta to Dalton and Chattanooga, which Sherman had destroyed before starting on the March to the Sea, and this I proposed to both Thomas and Grant, but the latter thought it unnecessary and forbade its being done, mostly, as I supposed, on account of the large expense it would entail. This made it obligatory to finance the undertaking, as well as to find men and materials to carry it out. Fortunately, Winslow was in the region of the railroad, and, although as young as the rest of us, he had had some experience before the war as a railroad contractor and was, besides, full of resources. I, therefore, put him and

his entire brigade at the work, with instructions to keep careful account of its cost, with the understanding that we should require the railroad company to repay it out of its first receipts. And this was done. Fortunately, the timbers for one or two of the most important bridges destroyed by Sherman had been framed by the railroad employees and were on the ground ready for erection. The adjacent forest was full of suitable timber, and, although the sawmills had been generally destroyed, sufficient trees were soon felled and shaped for use. Many of our troopers were experienced axemen, bridge-builders, and track-layers. With seven hundred axes, which were slow in coming from Chattanooga, and the hearty coöperation of the railroad officials, Winslow soon had out the necessary piles, bridge timbers, and cross-ties, but to straighten the rails, many of which had been wrapped around the trees or otherwise bent out of all shape, was a more serious undertaking. With the aid of his handy men Winslow was equal to that job also. Working night and day with frequent relays, he closed up the gaps between him and Steedman, who was working south from Dalton, and got the trains running from end to end within three weeks, thus solving all of our difficulties. Mail, passenger, and freight communication was reëstablished with the North, and all our wants, as well as those of the people, were soon fully supplied.

I have always regarded Winslow's work in rebuilding the railroad as most creditable. Indeed, there was no other instance which more fully or more creditably illustrates the capacity and re-

sourcefulness of the American volunteer cavalryman.

Early in May Joseph E. Brown, Confederate governor of Georgia, without consulting me, but entirely on his own responsibility, summoned the Legislature of the State to meet at the Capitol on the 22nd of that month. I invited him to Macon for a conference and, after telling him he had made a serious mistake, I authorized him, at his urgent request, to telegraph the President for his views, and for such orders as he might issue in the premises. The President made no direct reply, but the next day Secretary Stanton instructed me by telegraph to give "Mr. Brown" the following answer by order of the President:

First: That the collapse in the currency and the great destitution of provisions among the poor . . . of Georgia, mentioned in his telegram, have been caused by the treason, insurrection, and rebellion against the authority, Constitution, and laws of the United States, incited and carried on for the last four years by Mr. Brown and his Confederate rebels and traitors who are responsible for all the want and destitution now existing in that State.

Second: What Mr. Brown called the result which the fortunes of war have imposed upon the people of Georgia and all the misery, loss, and woe they have suffered are chargeable upon Mr. Brown and his Confederate rebels who usurped the authority of the State . . . and waged treasonable war against the United States and . . . protracted the war to the last extremity until compelled by superior force to lay down their arms and accept the result . . . as a just penalty of the crimes of treason and rebellion.

Third: That the restoration of peace and order cannot be entrusted to rebels and traitors who destroyed the peace and trampled down the order that had existed more than a half century and made Georgia a great and prosperous State. The persons who incited this war . . . will not be allowed to assemble at the call of their accomplice to act again as a Legislature of the State and usurp its authority and franchise. . . . In calling them together without permission of the President, Mr. Brown perpetrated a fresh crime that will be dealt with accordingly.

Fourth: You will further inform Mr. Brown that the President of the United States will, without delay, exert all the lawful powers of his office to relieve the people of Georgia . . . from the bondage of military tyranny, which armed rebels and traitors have so long imposed alike upon poor and rich. The President hopes that by restoring peace and order, giving security to life, liberty and property, by encouraging trade, arts, manufactures, and every species of industry, so as to revise the financial credit of the State and develop its great resources, the people will again soon be able to rejoice under the Constitution and Laws of the United States and of their own State in the prosperity and happiness they once had, but were deprived of by the treason and rebellion now overthrown. To all private persons who return to their allegiance to the United States and devote themselves to peaceful pursuits liberal clemency will be exercised.

You will communicate the foregoing answer to Mr. Brown and take prompt measures to prevent any assemblage of rebels as a Legislature or under any other pretext within your command. If any persons shall presume to answer or acknowledge the call of Mr. Brown mentioned in his telegram to the President you will immediately arrest them and report to this department for further instructions.[1]

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 646.

This was followed by another an hour later by the same authority, directing me to arrest Joseph E. Brown, "pretending to act as governor of Georgia" and to send him "in close custody under sufficient and secure guard" to Major General Augur at Washington, allowing him to hold no verbal or written communication with any person but the officer having him in charge after the receipt of this order.[1] Of course, this was done, but what took place there I never knew. Brown was an adroit politician and special pleader and doubtless established personal, if not political, relations with Mr. Johnson. At all events, he returned shortly to the State, and, while he did not pretend to exercise any of the functions of governor, from that time forth he certainly had more influence and was on more intimate terms with the President than any other man in the State. He was subsequently governor more than once and finally died many years afterward as a member of the U. S. Senate.

Mr. Stanton's instructions were more important as foreshadowing the Government policy in regard to "reconstruction" than as humiliating or restraining Brown in the exercise of authority after the collapse of the Confederacy. It made it clear that treason and rebellion were to be made odious, that no secession or confederate authority would be recognized at Washington, and that in their own time and way the Washington authorities would indicate the course to be followed by the states that had made war against the Union. While it did not intimate upon what class or group the work of reorganization would be laid, it made it certain that for

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 647.

the present, at least, it would not be entrusted to "Mr. Brown and his Confederate rebels and traitors." As nearly all the Southern politicians had been engaged "in treason, insurrection, and rebellion," they were as a class included within the terms of the President's anathema. There was no thought of pardoning or consulting the old leaders, and no hope could be drawn from it by even the old Union men. It was a note of vengeance and nothing more.

But the order for Brown's arrest in face of the parole I gave him was clearly an indication that such paroles might be disregarded and set aside. While obliged to carry out the President's order as received, I also felt it my duty to inform both Grant and the Secretary of War that I had paroled Governor Brown as commander-in-chief of the Georgia militia, nearly all of which was under arms when I entered the State.

The circumstances were interesting. Foreseeing shortly after Johnston's surrender that Brown, who had defied the Confederate authorities, might consider himself an independent authority, I sent him word that he had better not exercise any authority whatever as governor, but in face of this he issued his proclamation calling the legislature together at an early date. Thereupon I sent an officer to invite him to Macon for a conference. I took the precaution of telling the officer to say to the Governor that if he thought he would have any difficulty in finding his way he would personally escort him to Macon. The Governor thanked him and said he would go at once. That night, shortly after supper, a natty major in a brand new Confederate uniform called at

headquarters and on admission said in the most respectful manner: "His Excellency, Governor Brown, has taken rooms at the Brown Hotel, Suite 28, where he will be pleased to receive General Wilson at 8:30 this evening." As the message seemed somewhat peculiar under the circumstances, I asked the Major if he was sure he had delivered it as he had received it from the Governor. To this he said: "Yes, sir—exactly as the Governor gave it to me."

I replied: "Major, please repeat it," which he did in the terms he had just used.

Thereupon, I replied deliberately: "I see, Major, you have correctly given me the message entrusted to you. If there is any mistake it is the Governor's and not yours. You may, therefore, return to the Governor with my compliments and say: 'General Wilson's quarters are at the Lanier House in parlor A, where he expects to see His Excellency Governor Brown promptly at nine o'clock to-morrow morning. General Wilson adds, if His Excellency has the slightest doubt as to the significance of this message, General Wilson will send a sergeant of the guard with four men to escort His Excellency to General Wilson's headquarters.' "

From the change in the Major's countenance it was more evident than ever that he had made no mistake, and that he fully understood my meaning. At all events, he disappeared without further ceremony, and promptly at the hour designated "His Excellency" presented himself at my headquarters.

Neither referred to the messages exchanged the night before. The Governor seemed to understand my position exactly and I received him with every proper mark of respect and consideration, except

that I did not turn out the guard, nor fire a governor's salute for him.

The meeting was a pleasant and interesting one. The Governor was at that time in middle life and in the possession of all his faculties, which, I soon discovered, were by no means of a low order. I had heard an amusing account of himself and his family as having been reared in "the wire grass country of Cherokee, Georgia," where they had but few educational advantages and none for the cultivation of the graces. I was, therefore, somewhat surprised to find him smooth, suave, deferential, and polite, as well as more than usually intelligent. He carried himself with easy self-possession and appeared well dressed and prosperous, as might have been expected of one who had grown rich by blockade running, while the majority of his fellow-citizens had lost almost everything they had from the ravages of war.

After the usual salutation I told him on my own responsibility not to hold the meeting of the Legislature he had called against my warning, pointing out that such a meeting would probably be regarded by the Washington authorities as both premature and inexpedient. He argued the case in favor of early measures for the reëstablishment of social order and prosperity, but I remained firm. I urged him as a leading citizen to discourage even mass-meetings and public discussions as prejudicial to the quietude and exemption from excitement which all should desire throughout the state. I explained that, while I should hold myself responsible for the maintenance of order, I should expect the surrender of all State militia under arms when I entered the

state or called out since my arrival under no matter what pretext. I made it clear that this surrender should include the Governor as commander-in-chief and all military State officers. At this he seemed deeply concerned, apparently on the ground that such a policy on my part would rob him of his power and influence, whereupon I warned him earnestly against exercising any authority or power under the last election or under any other pretense whatever. He listened attentively to what I said, but was evidently unwilling to regard my authority as military commander with anything else than distrust, and during the discussion he made it apparent that he wished to appeal to the President to set aside my decision. As far as I knew, our meeting was the first one held between a loyal army commander and an elected governor holding authority from a seceding state, but, as I was also anxious to know what political view as well as what practical measures would be taken by the constituted authorities in reference to "reconstruction," I approved and forwarded his message to the President with the assurance that I should transmit to him any reply which might reach me.

After that was settled he tarried awhile and from his conversation showed clearly that he was not on good terms with General Cobb, whom he thought overbearing, bombastic, and inconsiderate. He had seen Cobb and other leading men the night before repeating more than once, as I thought, in a tone of ridicule the words which Cobb used in describing the recent battle: "My God! How the Georgia line did fight in the defense of Columbus!"

I naturally encouraged him to tell me what he

thought of Alexander H. Stevens, Herschell V. Johnson, Senator Hill, Mr. Tombs, Randolph Mott, James Johnson, and Colonel Washington, the last three of whom were Union men. It was evident that, while he talked freely of all and unkindly of none, he thought himself not only the most considerable man of the State, but its safest guide back into full and harmonious relations with the other states of the Union. He dwelt complacently on his strenuous opposition to Davis, his devotion to state's rights, and to the organization of the state militia under his own chosen commander as an independent force for its defense, and yet he did not seem to appreciate or even to have thought of a parole which would protect him as commander-in-chief from arrest and imprisonment. Foreseeing that this might be his fate, I had already directed Colonel Noble, who, it will be remembered, was gifted in that direction, to prepare a drastic document covering Brown's case, and as he was about to take his leave I handed it to him with the remark that perhaps he had better read and sign it. Cautious to the last, he asked what it was, and when I replied that it was a special parole prepared to cover his case he said: "Yes, yes, I thought of that some time ago, but it had escaped my mind." He then read it carefully with a changing and saddening countenance, and at the end laid it gravely on the table with the remark: "But, General, I can't sign that document."

At this surprising conclusion I asked why he could not sign the paper, calling attention to the fact that it might be a protection which under the Johnson-Sherman capitulation he was entitled to have.

To this he replied: "Why, General, it requires me to recant and abjure all the political acts and opinions of my life."

"Yes," said I. "Governor, that is one of its conditions, and if it does not cover the case completely it is a mistake and not an intentional omission, but under the circumstances I am still at a loss to understand why you hesitate. Please understand, however, that it is in no way compulsory!"

To this, with a deep and audible sigh, he replied: "If I sign that paper it will destroy all my political prospects forever."

That view of the case was novel, and it struck me as indicating that the Governor had not yet fully realized the significance or extent of the Union victory, and, therefore, rising from my seat and facing him squarely, I said: "My God! Governor, is it possible that you imagine, in the face of the part you have taken against the United States for the last four years, you have any prospect in this country but to be hanged?"

Evidently this presented the situation under a new and unexpected aspect, for, without a moment's hesitation, he said: "That view of the matter had not occurred to me." Thereupon, sitting again, and taking up the pen, he deliberately signed the document in duplicate, one copy of which I handed to him and the other forwarded immediately to the War Department, where it will doubtless be found duly briefed and filed. So far as I know, it was never published, though it served the governor more than one useful turn.

Taking his leave, with a countenance somewhat "sicklied o'er with a pale cast of thought," he re-

turned to the hotel, where several leading men were waiting for him. The next morning General Cobb told me what took place on his return. They asked at first for the results of his interview, to which he replied: "Well, gentlemen, General Wilson is a very clever young man, but he takes the military view of the situation."

This phrase gave Cobb particular satisfaction, for he repeated it frequently with a grim smile and an emphasis on the word that showed quite plainly not only his contempt for the Governor as a "poor white from Cherokee, Georgia," but as a scheming politician whom he was glad to see foiled in his effort to beguile me while striving to avoid responsibility for his own acts. It was interesting to note that even adversity had not yet leveled the distinctions between the rich and the poor, the slaveholder and the non-slaveholder, the military man and the politician, with their varying shades of interest and belief. It was apparent that their rivalries, even in the work of rehabilitation and reconstruction, were to continue to the end.

During the next four weeks I mingled much with the leading men, seeking their views and giving my own on every public question of interest. I counseled moderation in speech, abstention from public discussions, and a strict and studious devotion to the private duties of life. Many of those who had been prominent in affairs wanted to hold mass-meetings for the purpose of assuring the Government of their readiness to accept the Union and such laws as Congress might make for its complete re-establishment. To all such I said: "Don't do anything of the sort, but go home and attend to your

farms, stores, and business and you will be gratified in a short time to find that public affairs have taken care of themselves." While I cannot claim to have anticipated Senator Hoar's sententious but sound advice to all Southerners, "to raise more cotton and less hell," that was the substance of my counsel, and I am glad to record that it was accepted by the people of Georgia as a wise and safe rule of conduct. No public meetings were held and the planting population, at least, devoted itself industriously to taking care of the crops, and this business, owing to the high price of cotton, promised great profit.

The poor whites, who had been renters before the war, were nearly as well off after it. They took this advice in good part, and, although the season was late, made one of the best and most profitable crops the State ever raised. So deeply was I convinced of the wisdom of this course, and that peace would soon leave me without occupation, I thought for a time seriously of going into the planting business myself, not as a proprietor, for I had no money, but as a renter who could probably get all the negro labor I wanted. I proposed that General Croxton, a free-soil Kentuckian, and Major Beaumont should join me in the enterprise, but, fortunately, we encountered difficulties in securing a sufficient quantity of good land, which caused us to give up the project.

The attitude of the churches as a social force early attracted my attention. The clergy of all denominations, and especially the Episcopalians, from the bishop down, were slow in accepting the inevitable and at first were strongly disinclined to in-

clude "the President of the United States and all others in authority" in their regular supplications. The first to conform to this usage in the Southern states was the pastor of the principal Presbyterian parish of the town, who called upon me with a lady dressed in deep mourning one night shortly after my arrival. They came to intercede for her father, a distinguished judge, the Commissioner of Sequestration, who had gone into concealment for fear of arrest. Of course, their request was granted and a safeguard furnished at once, and this led to a general conversation, followed in due time by a pleasant friendship. Before leaving the reverend gentleman expressed some doubt as to his own course, whereupon I suggested that he should preach next Sunday on the text: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." I pointed out that this proverb, inscribed under Weir's beautiful picture over the chancel of the old chapel at West Point, would be regarded by every army officer, as well as by every man familiar with the Bible, as appropriate to the conditions which prevailed about them. My visitor promptly accepted my suggestion, and, I am glad to add, he preached an eloquent and appropriate sermon the next Sunday and followed by praying "for the President of the United States and all others in authority." The example, much to my gratification, was promptly followed by all the other churches of the city and the neighboring towns.

During that summer I established intimate relations with General Cobb, who, it will be remembered, had been before the war a member of the National Congress, speaker of the House of Repre-

sentatives, and secretary of the treasury in Buchanan's cabinet. He was still in middle life with unimpaired faculties, and, while possessing all the lofty pretensions of the old school Southerner, he was philosopher and statesman enough to recognize that he had lost all with the Lost Cause; that slavery was forever at an end, and that all who loved the South and its people must now accept the inevitable results and give their best efforts to repairing the ravages of war, reframing their laws, remodeling their institutions, and reëstablishing their industries. He called upon me frequently, and, while asking nothing for himself, it was easy to perceive that he stood with his class, all of whom had been rebels, and regarded it as the class whose advice and active assistance should be sought in the great work now before the country, and which was of such transcendent importance to both the North and the South.

I drew him out, as opportunity offered, on every aspect of the situation, and it was at my personal request that he wrote his celebrated letter, dated Macon, June 14, 1865,[1] which I transmitted the same day to President Johnson, the original manuscript of which is now on file in the Library of Congress. It was printed and widely circulated by the newspapers of the day, and, although full of wisdom, I regret to add, it was not received in any part of the country with the favor to which its moderate and statesmanlike views entitled it. It opened with the manly declaration that he was a secessionist and

[1] "Documentary History of Reconstruction," by Prof. Walter Fleming, Arthur H. Clark Company, Cleveland, 1906, Vol. I, p. 128, Howell Cobb to General Wilson.

counseled the people of his State to secede, that he had served in the army till the end of the war, and that his actions since then had conformed to the obligations of the surrender. He regarded the South as subjugated, and on that basis laid down the principles which he thought should guide the policy of both parties. He pointed out that the South's plain and simple duty was "a return to the peaceful and quiet employments of life; obedience to the Constitution and laws of the United States; and the faithful discharge of all the duties and obligations imposed upon them by the new state of things."

While recognizing that the policy of the North could not be so easily determined and that the hour of triumph was not necessarily the hour for wise judgments, he maintained that not only the present condition, but the conditions which should be desired, should receive primary and paramount consideration. He then declared that the actual situation was as bad as the South's worst enemy could wish, that the institution of slavery had been interwoven with the entire framework of Southern society and into every page of its statute books, and that its abolition which all accepted would necessarily revolutionize the whole system of agriculture and labor, as well as greatly retard the restoration of prosperity. Acknowledging fully and without qualifications that the successful termination of the war had restored the Union, he pleaded, not only for the South, but for the whole country, that the bitter animosities should be softened, that prosperity should be restored, and that a spirit of magnanimity and generosity should shape the policy of the conquerors. He added in impressive language

that the world was sadly in need of such an example and that the United States should show it. He deprecated the prejudices and passions and appealed to the mellowing influences of kindness and of generosity as the surest means of making the Southerners forget the privations of the present and the sufferings of the past. Finally he declared that the security of the future required no further punishment of the South.

Having laid down these general principles, he proposed that they should be carried into practical effect by the discontinuance of all prosecutions and penalties and by the proclamation of a general amnesty for all past acts to those who had in good faith abandoned the contest and returned to their allegiance.

In further support of these merciful measures he said: "If my voice could be heard in the councils of the Government, I should seek to restore concord and good feeling by extending it to those from whom I ask it in return, and by a course of generous confidence to win the willing and cheerful support of those whose loyalty and allegiance when thus won could be relied upon. No one will doubt that the man who is received back into the Union and feels that he has been subjected to no severe penalty, and been required to submit to no humiliating test, will make a truer and better citizen than the one who feels that his citizenship has been obtained by submitting to harsh and degrading terms which he was compelled to yield to, to secure the rights he has acquired. . . ."

After reiterating his opinion that the institution of slavery provided the best system of labor

that could be devised for the negro race and pointing out that the Southern people were not only prepared to conform to the new state of things, but disposed to pursue it toward the negroes "in a spirit of humanity and kindness," he took it for granted that "the future relations between the negroes and their former owners, like all other questions of domestic policy, would be under the control and direction of the State Governments." He suggested that a more certain and well-defined system than could be enforced under military regulation should be designed and promulgated to meet "the many questions that might arise." He seemed also to fear that a system of internal taxation might be adopted which would impose burdens upon the people they could not meet, and might end in the virtual confiscation of their estates, and that time should be given to taxpayers to raise the necessary money and thus save the remnants of their properties.

Lastly, while fully conscious that what he had written might be criticised as proceeding from an interested party, he frankly said: "This is true, I am . . . deeply interested in the question, not so much for myself, for I have no future, as for my friends, and my countrymen. . . . But we are not the only persons interested in the solution of the great problem which stands in the history of the world without precedent or parallel. . . ."

I need not call attention to the fact that in transmitting this weighty and dignified contribution to the question of reconstruction, I counted myself as having performed a public duty, the wisdom of which has been amply justified by the course of subsequent history. It was followed by many other letters of

similar tenor from original Union men and original secessionists from various parts of the South. But I regret to add that none produced the slightest favorable effect on the course of events at Washington. The passions and animosities of Stanton and the radical leaders, doubtless aided by the split between them and Johnson, resulted in plans and measures for the restoration of the South to the Union which led to great confusion and aroused the opposition of the old secessionists, heated the Southern blood, and led later to the organization of the Ku Klux Klan as the only practicable means of driving out the scandalous governments of the carpet-bag adventurers and ignorant freedmen, aided by renegade allies among the poor whites.

While it was General Grant's purpose to give me command of the Department of Georgia,[1] I have always been thankful that he failed, whether from the opposition of Stanton, the preference of the President for James B. Steedman, or from the fact that Johnson had not forgotten the plain talk I gave him at Nashville in regard to the Tennessee cavalry. Whatever may have been the motive, it left me in comparative idleness, which impelled me to ask for muster out a few months later. My request was granted by the Adjutant General as a matter of course, but when the order passed through General Grant's headquarters he countermanded it with the understanding that he should retain me as a major general as long as he could find appropriate employment for me in that grade. While my subsequent service as a district commander was not equal to my rank, it afforded perfunctory employment, and doubtless saved me from extended and annoy-

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 882.

ing participation in the thankless and complicated work of reconstruction.

While the Cavalry Corps was reassembling from its wide distribution throughout Georgia and Florida, as heretofore described, Thomas notified me to hold it in readiness for transfer to Texas, and this gave both officers and men unalloyed satisfaction. It indicated that we were to participate in the expulsion of Maximillian and his allies from Mexico, as required by the Monroe Doctrine, if they concluded to fight rather than leave the country peaceably. Wisely enough, they chose the latter course and our short-lived dream of service on foreign soil gave way to the muster out, which was fully decided upon before the end of May. It was at first proposed to discharge only the newer regiments and to retain the veterans, estimated at ten or twelve thousand men, who had from one to two years yet to serve on their second enlistment. But on my representation that no such force was needed in Georgia, that cavalrymen charged with the care of their horses for at least an hour daily were not fitted for garrison service in connection with reconstruction, and, finally, that two or three infantry regiments would be ample to maintain order in the State, it was decided to send my three divisions to the North by the way of Atlanta, Dalton, and Chattanooga for muster out.

This routine work fell to the regular mustering officers, supervised by Major Hosea of my staff and General Upton of the Fourth Division. The troops made their way without haste along the railroad which Winslow was rebuilding. Depots of supplies had been established at convenient points by the

corps chief quartermaster and chief commissary, which made the march an easy one. This was followed by the muster out of each division as it reached its designated camp and by the transportation of the various regiments to their respective states. Nothing could have been conducted more rapidly, nor with more perfect discipline. The entire command disappeared from the service and dropped into the bosom of the people with no other commotion than that which naturally followed the return of the war-worn soldiers to their homes and friends.

A formal order dissolving the corps was issued by General Thomas and I followed that by my farewell General Order Number 39, dated at Macon, Georgia, July 2, 1865:

To the officers and men of the Cavalry Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi.—Your corps has ceased to exist! The rebellion has terminated in the reëstablishment of your country upon the basis of nationality and perpetual unity. Your deeds have contributed a noble part to the glorious result; they have passed into history and need no recital from me. In the nine months during which I have commanded you I have heard no reproach upon your conduct and have had no disaster to chronicle.

The glowing memories of Franklin, Nashville, West Harpeth, Ebenezer Church, Selma, Montgomery, Columbus, West Point, and Macon may well fill your hearts and mine with pride.

You have learned to believe yourselves invincible and, contemplating your honorable deeds, may justly cherish that belief. You may be proud of your splendid discipline no less than of your courage, zeal, and endurance. The noble impulses which have inspired you in the past will be a source of enduring honor.

"Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." Do not forget that clear heads, honest hearts, and stout arms guided by pure patriotism are the surest defense of your country in every peril. Upon them depend the substantial progress of your race and order of civilization as well as the liberty of all mankind.

Let your example in civil life be an inducement to industry, good order, and enlightenment while your deeds in war shall live in the grateful remembrance of your countrymen.

Having discharged every military duty honestly and faithfully, return to your homes with the noble sentiment of your martyred President deeply impressed upon every heart: "With malice toward none and charity for all, strive to do the right as God gives you to see the right."[1]

While many of these officers and men fell by the wayside in civil life, the great majority became good citizens, all the better for their sacrifices and services in behalf of the Union. Many afterward rose to distinction both in civil and military life.

McCook of the First Division became governor of Colorado Territory and minister to the Hawaiian Republic. He died at advanced age in 1909.

Croxton was appointed by President Grant minister to Bolivia, where he died of tuberculosis at the end of a few years' service.

LaGrange studied law and became an eloquent public speaker in San Francisco, where he served a term as superintendent of the mint. Later he became a promoter and mine owner and afterward commander of the Soldiers' Home in southern California, where he now lives.

Robert M. Kelly was for many years collector

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 1059.

of internal revenue and editor of the *Louisville Commercial.*

Wickliffe Cooper became an officer of the regular army, in which he died before reaching middle life. John M. Bacon was appointed to the regular army, where he served with marked usefulness and distinction till he reached the age of retirement.

John F. Weston was appointed on my recommendation to the regular army, where he became in turn captain of cavalry, commissary of subsistence, graduate of various service schools, and commissary general. He received the medal of honor for unusual gallantry and enterprise in the capture of a fleet of steamers on the Alabama River, served with distinction in the Spanish War, commanded the Military Division of the Philippines, and is generally regarded as one of the most intelligent, dashing, and independent officers of his day.

Eli Long never recovered entirely from the partial paralysis produced by the wound received in the assault of Selma. And although placed on the retired list, he became a lawyer and a grape culturist and lived to a comparatively old age, honored and respected by all who knew him.

General Minty became a railroad superintendent in the middle and western states, but his life was one of vicissitude, mingled with success and failure.

A. O. Miller returned to the practice of medicine. His military life was an episode which inspired him to do his best to the end and he made no failures.

General Kilpatrick threw up his commission in the regular artillery and, true to his ambition, be-

came an active politician. He was an orator of rare power and eloquence and a popular Republican leader whose patriotism was ardent and whose ambition was boundless. He was twice rewarded for his services and failures by the appointment of minister to Chili, where he died on December 2, 1881, a disappointed man.[1]

Eli Murray became United States marshal for Kentucky and twice governor of Utah Territory, where he acquitted himself with equal satisfaction to the Mormons and the Gentiles. He was a lawyer by profession and died past middle life at Salt Lake City.

Smith D. Atkins returned to the practice of the law when the volunteer army was disbanded. He has been for many years an editor and an able leader of public opinion at Freeport, Illinois.

General Upton, shortly after the war, made a tour of Europe and Asia and wrote a work on the "Military Policy of the United States," which was printed many years afterward by Congress and is now regarded as a standard authority in our army. He was always a military enthusiast and tactician. He suffered from an incurable malady of the head and its passages, which ultimately became unbearable and led to suicide before he had passed middle life.[2]

Alexander returned to his regiment and in due course became a field officer for most of his life on the frontiers. He was finally retired because of in-

[1] See Cullum's Register for details of Kilpatrick's service, Vol. II, p. 786, by J. H. Wilson.

[2] "Life and Letters of Emory Upton," by Peter S. Michie, with an introduction by James Harrison Wilson, D. Appleton & Co., 1885.

firmities incident to the service, which caused his death on May 4, 1887.[1]

General Winslow became a successful contractor, railroad builder and manager, and did much work which was better than the pay he got for it. He has lived many years in Paris, where he has a wide circle of acquaintances and friends.

John W. Noble settled after the war at St. Louis, where he developed into a lawyer of great learning and distinction. He became secretary of the interior in Harrison's cabinet and now lives in St. Louis. No man's career better illustrates what a citizen of the great Republic should do in the emergencies of life.

General Hatch became a full colonel of regular cavalry and no one better deserved that unusual distinction. He served capably and well till he reached the retiring age. He was finally killed in a runaway accident instead of on the field of battle.

General Datus E. Coon became a citizen of California, where he played an honorable and useful part to the end, but died before reaching old age.

Colonel Robert R. Stewart returned to his state after peace was established and became a successful man of affairs and a citizen without reproach.

General R. W. Johnson returned to his regiment in the regular army, performed his routine duties for many years, but voluntarily retired and settled at St. Paul, where he played the exemplary part of a good citizen in all that pertained to the welfare of the community in which he lived. He devoted his declining years to letters, leaving behind him

[1] "Life of Andrew Jonathan Alexander," by James Harrison Wilson, privately printed.

several interesting volumes of military biography.

Colonel Thomas J. Harrison returned to Indiana and became a useful and honored citizen.

Colonel James Biddle rejoined his regiment in the regular army and passed much of his life on the frontier. He retired as a brigadier general in 1894 and died in 1910.

General William J. Palmer became a successful promoter and railroad builder who financed and constructed the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and most of its connections. He was the leading man of the region of his activities and accumulated a great fortune, which he devoted liberally to the arts and to the advancement of the growing city in which he died after a long and useful life. He was always a lover of horses, one of which fell with him, dislocating his spine and completely paralyzing his body from the neck downward. An equestrian monument is quite properly to be erected to his memory at Colorado Springs.

General Joseph F. Knipe, Colonel George W. Jackson, and Colonel Gilbert M. Johnson returned to their native states when mustered out and resumed the occupations to which they were devoted before the war. They became useful citizens, but achieved no marked success to distinguish them from the great mass of their fellow soldiers.

General John H. Hammond, after several years' service in the Interior Department, acquired an interest in Superior City, at the head of the Great Lakes, which in due course made him and his family rich and prosperous.

Many other officers of the corps rose to useful-

ness and distinction both in civil and military life, but it would extend this work beyond its proper limits to detail the distinctions they achieved. Many officers were specially commended in my reports for unusual gallantry and conspicuous services, and I think the Official Records will show that a larger number received the medal of honor than any other corps of the Union army.

While still at Macon trying to get into touch with General Sherman, over four hundred miles to the northward, I received a letter from him, which I answered as follows on May 8, 1865:

. . . Permit me to write you a few lines unofficially: I believe that under the circumstances I have done everything you could have required and have kept you and others duly informed. For your personal information, however, I send you a copy of my summary of operations, from which you will see that in thirty days we marched over five hundred miles, took six thousand three hundred prisoners, twenty-three colors, and one hundred and fifty-six guns, defeating Forrest, scattering the militia, destroying every railroad, iron establishment, and factory in north Alabama and Georgia. We marched from Montgomery to this place, two hundred and twenty miles, in six days, resting one day at Columbus and West Point. I mention these things to show you that our cavalry is cavalry at last. You may not have forgotten our conversations in regard to the matter at Gaylesville and your own remarks in reference to it. I'll remind you of them one of these days.

I have now thirteen thousand five hundred men for duty in the three divisions with me, thoroughly armed, well mounted and equipped. I believe when you see them you will say with me, it is nothing more than the truth, that they cannot be excelled. I regard this corps to-day as a model for modern cavalry in organization, armament, and

discipline, and I hazard nothing in saying that it embodies more of the virtue of the three arms, without any sacrifice of those of cavalry, than any similar number of men in the world. From an undisciplined mass it has taken the most perfect discipline; from fragments of every variety it has taken a most coherent organization. The spirit of the men is magnificent, the officers are admirable, and all think their corps invincible. This is strong language, and may look like self-praise, but it is simply for you and should be your pride as well as mine. Without your *carte blanche* and the admirable support of General Thomas nothing could have been accomplished.

To put the test to my assertions, I would like to have the corps put in camp at any point you may designate, and everybody, including General Grant, who feels an interest in such matters invited to review and inspect it. If you do not agree with me I shall acknowledge myself mistaken in my opinions. . . .

. . . I have recommended Brevet Major General Upton and Brigadier General Long, for major generals, Brigadier Generals Croxton and McCook for brevet major generals, Brevet Brigadier Generals Alexander and Winslow for full brigadiers; also Colonels Minty, Miller, and La-Grange for the same. I think the officers I just mentioned are the best cavalry officers I ever saw. They have richly earned their promotion, and I hope you will urge General Grant to give it to them.[1]

[1] That the history and performances of the Cavalry Corps M. D. M. fully justify the high praise given above to General Sherman appears from Colonel George Denison's "History of Cavalry," London, Macmillan & Co., 1878, pp. 469 *et seq.* After giving a condensed account of the organization and operations, the author concludes, notwithstanding his English partiality for the Confederates:

"This was one of the most remarkable cavalry operations of the war, for, as we have said, it was not a mere raid or dash, but an invading army determined to fight its way through. . . . It is certainly one of the most extraordinary affairs in the history of the cavalry service, and recalls the romantic episodes of the

It is no part of my plan to dwell upon the troubles of reconstruction. While I early favored the abolition of slavery as a measure of humanity and civilization no less than of punishment for the crime of secession and rebellion, I had but little confidence in the average Southern politician. While I found some Union men, like James Johnson, first provisional governor of Georgia; Randolph Mott, and Colonel Washington, a kinsman of George Washington, and the first loyal postmaster at Macon, I was forced to the conclusion that there were not enough sterling and unshaken Union men and statesmen in the South at the close of the war to manage the complicated business of reconstruction. I supposed that some workable plan would be found to call the best men of both sections to assist in devising a plan and bringing the states that had tried to secede into proper political and economic relations with the rest of the Union. But I was at no time asked for my views by anyone except Badeau, who wrote, as I supposed for Grant as well as for himself, and yet I found means of giving them not only to the War Department but to the public at large before terminating my connection with the State.

On account of unsettled social conditions and vagabondage, which necessarily followed the breakdown of the Confederacy and the abolition of slavery, I found it necessary, without instruction from above, to meet actual conditions, to issue on July 5,

Crusades, where the armies consisted almost solely of knights who dismounted to attack fortified places. It is a striking illustration of what can be done by the judicious use of a force of mounted riflemen if bravely led and skillfully commanded."

1865, the following orders for the guidance of the freedmen and their former masters till superseded by the orders of the Freedman's Bureau:

1. The common law governing domestic relations, giving parents authority and control over their children and guardians control over their wards, is in force.

2. The former masters are constituted the guardians of minors and of the aged and infirm in the absence of parents or other near relations capable of supporting them.

3. Young men and women under twenty-one years of age will remain under the control of their parents or guardians, until they become of age, thus aiding to support their parents and younger brothers and sisters.

4. The former masters of freedmen must not turn away the young and infirm, nor refuse to give them food and shelter. Nor shall the able-bodied men and women go away from their homes or live in idleness and leave their parents or children or younger brothers or sisters to be supported by others.

5. Former masters of freedmen will not be permitted to turn away or drive from their plantations faithful hands who have helped to make the crops, when the crops are saved, without paying for the labor already performed.

6. Freedmen, like all other men, are amenable to civil and criminal law, and are liable to be punished for violations of law just the same as white citizens, but in no case will brutality be allowed on the part of the former master. Thinking men will at once see that, with the end of slavery, all enactments and customs which were necessary for its preservation must cease to have effect.

7. Persons of age who are free from any of the obligations referred to above are at liberty to find new homes whenever they can obtain proper employment, but they will not be supported by the Government or by their former masters in idleness and vagrancy.

8. It will be left to the employer and servant to agree upon the wages to be paid, and any just arrangement or contract will not be interfered with; but freedmen are advised that for the present they ought to expect only moderate wages, and when their employers cannot pay them money they ought to be content with a fair share in the crops to be raised. This rule is subject to such modification as the Freedman's Bureau may require.

9. All officers, soldiers, and citizens are requested to give publicity to these rules and to instruct the freed people as to their new rights and obligations.

All offenses hereunder may be tried by a military commission or provost's Court.[1]

As can be well understood, I was up against one of the gravest problems of the times, and did what I could to solve it with as little violence as possible, and without unnecessary embarrassment either to the Government or to the people. I had, of course, had no experience in framing such orders, but, in looking back on them with such additional wisdom as a half century may have brought me, I cannot see how they could have been much improved. They were widely circulated by newspapers and handbills, and it is a pleasure to add that no complaint ever reached me about them from either the white or colored people of Georgia or from Washington.

Having early after my arrival at Macon examined into the conduct of Captain Wirtz at the Andersonville prison and caused his arrest and transportation to Washington for trial, I was ordered to appear as a witness before the military commission with books, records, and plans to testify as to

[1] O. R. Serial No. 104, p. 1068.

the condition in which I found the prison camp in my first visit to that region.[1]

I had hoped to meet General Grant and his staff on my trip north, but they were taking a holiday and visiting their friends in the various parts of the country. Some delay occurred in taking my testimony, which I spent at Wilmington and Philadelphia, and finally, when discharged from attendance on the court, I made a short visit to my home in Illinois. From there I went to Louisville and Cincinnati for the purpose of meeting General Grant, but he had changed his plans and gone east, and hence I failed to meet him till he came to Georgia in November. I was naturally anxious to hear the inside of the wonderful campaign in Virginia, as well as to give him a personal account of my own campaign through Alabama and Georgia.

The summer was long and hot and all the more oppressive because the excitement of war was at an end. While I had been assigned to command the district of Macon and had accompanied General Steedman to Milledgeville to witness the proceedings of the first convention which President Johnson had permitted to assemble in October, and had afterward relieved General Steedman for a few days at Augusta, I was far from pleasantly employed. I foresaw that I should soon be mustered out, and before returning to duty as a captain of engineers I had dreams of European travel, of a trip to Mexico, and even of a fortune in cotton planting, but none of them materialized. They all

[1] My testimony will be found in General A. P. Chipman's "Tragedy of Andersonville," pp. 47 *et seq.*

failed, doubtless, for the simple reason that I had not sufficient money to carry any one into effect.

Late in November Grant, with Badeau and Babcock, made a tour through the South and asked me to meet him at Atlanta, which I did. After dining we spent the evening in a full and friendly discussion of every important military and civil event which had taken place since we parted the year before in the valley of Virginia. I have always remembered that night as one of the most interesting of my life. General Grant never appeared in better condition, nor in better light. He showed me the most perfect friendship and confidence, exactly as though I had never been out of his military family, and as though I were his equal in every respect. With rare modesty and yet without the slightest restraint, he told the story of his last campaign in all its details. He praised both officers and men in unstinted measure, passing in review all the leading generals of the day, speaking ill of none and kindly of all. He praised Sheridan and Humphreys as the greatest of his immediate lieutenants. He minimized the hurtful effects of delay upon his own reputation. While magnifying the importance of the March to the Sea, he claimed that he first suggested it, but feared it might be carried prematurely into effect. While admitting that he had always trusted Halleck's good offices and kind disposition farther than he should have done, he credited him with disinterested motives and respectable talents. He spoke in high terms of McPherson and Sedgwick, both killed in battle, and mentioned many officers of inferior rank with affection and admiration. While he had nothing but praise for the Army

of the Potomac, he did not disguise the fact that he regarded the Army of the Tennessee as the best, all things considered, he had ever been personally associated with.

He expressed profound sorrow for Lincoln's death as an irreparable blow to the orderly and conservative reconstruction of the Southern states. While he did not hesitate to discredit the judgment and statesmanship of Andrew Johnson, nor to conceal his dislike of Stanton's arbitrary ways, he distrusted the senatorial group with which Stanton was associated, and declared that his own views were not only thoroughly conservative, but thoroughly kind, as to the generals and politicians of the South. He hoped that all classes would frankly accept the situation and devote themselves unselfishly to the restoration of friendly relations between the North and the South. He emphasized the statement that we had had bloodshed and punishment enough, and that we of the North should now strive, without prejudice or passion, to protect those we had paroled, to close the wounds of war, and to start the South anew on the road to prosperity and fortune.

At eleven o'clock he dismissed Badeau and Babcock to their rooms with the remark that he wanted to talk alone with me, and when the talk was through would give me the spare bed in his own room. With their withdrawal we renewed the conversation and kept it going till one o'clock in the morning, during which he stated his views on other important questions of the day. He indicated for the first time his desire, now that Maximillian's Empire had come to an end, to march an army into

Canada for the settlement of the Alabama claims and the expulsion of the British flag, not only from that country, but from every British colony on the continent. He declared that in carrying out such a policy we could mobilize five hundred thousand of the best infantry and artillery and fifty thousand of the best cavalry in the world, and suggested that the ex-Confederate leaders would hasten to enroll themselves under the national flag for the execution of that great purpose.

At one o'clock we went to bed, but, as can well be understood, I had by that time become thoroughly aroused to the great events of the past and to the great questions of the future which he had brought forward that evening, and, instead of going to sleep, I lay pondering their solution. After perhaps thirty minutes I turned over, heaving an unconscious sigh, whereupon the General said: "If you can't go to sleep, Wilson, let us get up and finish our conversation." Of course, I accepted the suggestion and we at once carried it into effect, our talk continuing unbroken till we were called to breakfast at eight o'clock.

To use the phrase of a common friend, we had "posted and closed the books;" peace was fully re-established; the War of the Rebellion was ended forever; and we were both entering upon a new period of our lives.

# XI

## AFTER THE WAR

Disbanded officers—National Express and Transportation Company—Leave of absence—Defenses of the Delaware—Surveys and internal improvements—Panama Canal—Transferred to the infantry—Des Moines and Rock Island Rapids—St. Louis and Southeastern Railway—Resign from the army—Cairo and Vincennes Railroad—Employments of civil life.

Before leaving Georgia, which I did in December, 1865, I made a report to the Secretary of War setting forth at some length the conditions which prevailed in that State from the close of the war till the end of 1865. It was my only contribution to the problem of reconstruction, and, as it is not only too long for condensation, but has long since ceased to be of vital interest, I merely refer the student of such matters to the *Chicago Republican* for December, 1865.

One of the subordinate questions after peace was established was to find employment for the disbanded officers of both sides, especially for the Confederates. A number of the latter, in the heat and humiliation of defeat, were irreconcilable. A few emigrated to Mexico, a few were later employed as officers in the Egyptian army, but the great ma-

jority cast in their lot with the people from whom they sprang and resumed the callings they had left in civil life. But there was a large number who had been officers and soldiers by profession in the old army, who had no other calling, and for whom the leaders thought it the part of wisdom to find honorable occupation. Joseph E. Johnston and a number of his friends conceived the idea of establishing the National Express and Transportation Company, which would require managers and agents in all the important business centers, north as well as south. They formed a corporation under that title, subscribed the capital and elected Johnston president. On application for an officer of the Northern army to manage the business, especially in the Northern states, General Grant designated me for the place in flattering terms and just as I was starting north I received notice both from Grant and Johnston that the business was already in order for my cooperation. As I was only a captain of engineers, and did not intend to remain in the army for promotion, I notified all parties that I should accept. My salary was fixed at the high figure of $12,000 a year, with the understanding that I was to become the chief executive officer of the company. I was without experience in the transportation business, but, as I had confidence in General Johnston, who had been quartermaster general of the army and was therefore well versed in matters of that sort, I had but few misgivings as to my capacity to manage the new company or as to its probable success. The Adams, and the American were at that time the leading express companies. It was currently stated that the Adams Company, which had been

divided and continued business in the Southern as well as Northern states during the rebellion, had called in only five per cent. of its subscriptions. This became an unfortunate example, for each Southern subscriber naturally reasoned that the new company would not require a larger assessment and, consequently, each man who had only a hundred dollars subscribed for twenty shares, instead of for one or two. The consequence was that many failed to pay the second installment and, therefore, the company was without sufficient capital from the start. This circumstance was unknown to me at the time I accepted, but it came forcibly to my attention a few weeks later.

In my efforts to establish the business over the Pennsylvania Railroad and its connections, then the central and most important artery of transportation, I soon found that I should have to contract under the practice of the day for a certain space in the baggage or express cars at the same or similar rates paid by the established companies. This necessitated ready money to the extent of at least $200,000 for the first year, and after satisfying myself that the business could not be established without that sum I made requisition for the same. I had, of course, been in constant communication with General Johnston and his experts and had kept them constantly and precisely informed in respect to every aspect of the business. They knew as well and as accurately as I the amount that would be needed and caused the necessary assessments on the subscribed capital to be issued, but, unfortunately, the assessments were not paid. A few subscribers responded, but by far the larger number were un-

able to meet their calls. Consequently the company was bankrupt, and, foreseeing this result, I accompanied my requisitions with the request that my resignation, which I also enclosed, should be accepted, and this was done.

I came north late in December and was married at Wilmington, Delaware, on January 3, 1866, to Ella Andrews, the daughter of General John W. Andrews, late Colonel of the First Delaware Volunteers, and the sister of my classmate and aid-de-camp, Captain John N. Andrews, afterward colonel of the Twelfth U. S. Infantry and Brigadier General of Volunteers in the Spanish War.

After ten days in New York, made memorable by dinners, balls, and theater parties, we went to Richmond, where I completed the arrangements with General Johnston in reference to the new express company. While life seemed full of hope and promise, there was already more than one cloud above the horizon.

As I had saved but little, I was forced soon after leaving the express company to throw up the year's leave of absence which had been granted me, with the understanding that I should resign at its expiration. Through the official kindness of the Chief of Engineers, I was then assigned to temporary duty as assistant engineer on the defenses of the Delaware, which lasted less than three months, at the end of which, in the fall of 1866, I was ordered to Davenport, Iowa, to make surveys and plans for the improvement of the Rock Island and the Des Moines rapids and for a line of deep water navigation from Green Bay by the way of Fox River and Rock River, and also from Chicago by the

Illinois River to the Mississippi. This was the opening measure for the systematic and comprehensive improvement of our inland waterways.

I had had no experience whatever in such work, nor in dealing with such important questions, but General Grant, reasoning from what he had seen me doing on the bayous of Mississippi and Louisiana, had reached the conclusion that I was the right man to study, grow up with, and solve the questions involved in my new assignment.

Somewhat later he directed the Chief of Engineers to charge me with the official study of the question of an isthmian or inter-oceanic ship canal in Central America and to place all reports and correspondence relating thereto at my disposal. His own interest in that important question was first aroused by his friend and fellow statesman, Captain Ammen of the navy, who, to the day of his death many years afterward, was one of the most intelligent and constant friends of "an inter-oceanic ship canal" at such place as exhaustive surveys should show to be best adapted to that purpose. My own interest in the question has remained unabated to the present day, and with a tolerable knowledge of all that has been said and done I held, and still hold, that there is no adequate solution of the problem but a tide-level canal, without respect to cost or length of time required for its completion.

While steamboats were still the principal means of transportation on the western rivers, Robert E. Lee and his classmate, Mason, both distinguished engineers, with the aid of other military and civil engineers, had been charged with the improvement of the rapids of the Mississippi. They confined

themselves, however, to subaqueous blasting and chisel work, but their efforts, although persisted in for years and costing large sums of money, proved entirely futile. The places where they worked could hardly be found. All such projects had been suspended during the war, but with the return of peace and the revival of business, river transportation again became an important factor. It was just as true then as it is now that the rivers did not generally run in the right direction, and that those in the Northern States at least froze up during the winter, but the people called vociferously for improvements, and the most important improvements were undertaken in turn as soon as feasible plans could be devised.

My first duty under my new employment, after a personal examination of the sites and routes of the various works and surveys, was the employment of the most competent civil engineers that could be had and the organization of parties to make complete surveys of the various routes and to prepare exhaustive studies for such works as might be found necessary. I reasoned that when I knew the exact facts of each case and had familiarized myself with the treatment and results of such streams and rapids as were similar, or in any way like those which had already been disposed of in our own or other countries, I should know as much as any more experienced engineer in reference to the questions under consideration. At all events, that was my working conclusion and the basis of all measures I recommended thereafter.

As soon as I reached Davenport I organized competent surveying parties under Mr. D. C. Jenné of

New York, Mr. James Worall, and Mr. W. P. Shunk of Pennsylvania, Major Hoffman, and Captain Ulffers, late of the volunteer army. Captain Hains of the Engineer Corps had already been detailed as my assistant, and with the aid of these able men I soon had four principal and several subsidiary parties in the field, numbering in the aggregate between thirty and forty civil engineers of all grades. I, of course, pushed field operations with all possible vigor, and by early the next year the various projects began to take definite shape.

Here I should explain that in the reorganization of the regular army in 1866 I was appointed lieutenant colonel of the Thirty-fifth Infantry, but continued in charge of the works previously assigned to me. General Grant had put my name at the head of the list of colonels, intending to give me precedence over all new appointments, whether of cavalry or infantry, but when the list went to the President for his sanction he insisted on putting two older regulars who outranked me into it. The list then went to the Adjutant General, who, as required by army regulations, arranged it according to the date of prior regular army commissions for appointments made the same day. Besides, the act of Congress required that one-third of the new field officers should go to volunteers and that no regular officer should be considered as a volunteer. These two circumstances threw both Upton and me into the list of lieutenant colonels, and, as that list had also to be arranged according to the dates of prior regular commissions and we were junior captains, we finally landed at the foot of the lieutenant colonels, I in the infantry and Upton in the artillery.

As might have been supposed, my surveys and examinations eliminated the Rock River and Green Bay route as not only impracticable but far too costly for a deep water line between the Lakes and the Mississippi.

The Chicago, Des Plaines, and Illinois River route was found to be practicable, and a project was submitted to cut down the summit level, widen and deepen the canal from Chicago to Ottawa, and then by a system of locks and dams through the Illinois to the Mississippi. It was substantially the first part of this project with all of its principal dimensions which the Chicago Drainage Commissions adopted and carried into effect many years later.

The surveys showed the fall of the Rock Island Rapids to be about twenty-one feet in thirteen miles, divided into reefs or chains and navigable pools, which could be effectually connected by removing the rock ledges, but, as this involved the excavation of many thousand cubic yards, instead of undertaking such a task under running water, I resolved to do it by constructing coffer dams around the proper areas and, after pumping out the water, covering the bed with workmen, blasting out and removing the broken stone so as to make proper channels. This plan was proposed by Charles G. Case and Company of New York, the lowest bidders, and, although the coffer dam at Sycamore Chain included and laid bare one hundred and sixty acres of river bed, the work was carried through without accident or delay and has proved sufficient for the accommodation of the river commerce at that place.

The case at the Des Moines Rapids from Montrose and Nauvoo to Keokuk, twelve miles below,

was somewhat different. The river was considerably wider, the channel shallower and not so well defined, and the fall of about twenty feet was largely confined to the lower eight miles. The solution of the problem was, therefore, more difficult. While there was no case exactly like it known, the rapids of the St. Lawrence, although carrying a much larger and more constant volume of water in the dry season, resembled it more closely than any other. Several rapids on that river had been overcome by the construction of locks and dams and that precedent was a large factor in favor of a similar remedy at Keokuk. This plan with its details was carried out by Mr. Jenné under my supervision, but at my request the project was submitted to a Board of Engineers, which included W. Milner Roberts, C. E., of Pittsburgh, and after approval of the work was let to local contractors, who carried it successfully to completion. These projects and my supervision of them covered a period of four years. The locks of the Keokuk canal were at their completion the largest in America or in the world, and the canal itself has proven equal to all the demands made upon it.

It is noteworthy that I reported that it would be but a few years till a much larger volume of traffic would pass across than through or along any of these improvements, and this prediction was abundantly verified in due time.

It was during this period, shortly before I left the army in 1870, that Captain James B. Eads of St. Louis brought forward his project for the improvement of the mouth of the Mississippi by the jetty system and sought my advice.

His project, as original as it was bold, led to a

heated discussion among both military and civil engineers. The Chief Engineer of the army took strong ground against the Eads plan, and suggested an artificial cut-off or canal into Lake Pontchartrain. But General Barnard, also a high scientist, differed with him and pronounced in favor of Eads. The controversy was a notable one, and, after considering all the attainable facts, I gave Eads a written opinion endorsing his plans, but in a personal interview I warned him that he would find the opposition too strong for him, unless he could secure the help of influential men at Washington, to whom I later gave him letters of introduction.

Eads was a man of great natural ability and, although laying no claims to the profession of engineer, he proposed to ask the Government for neither money nor assistance of any kind till he had demonstrated both the feasibility and the efficiency of his plan. Such a proposition as this, involving as it did several million dollars, had never been submitted to our Government or to any government, in fact, by a private citizen, but it was so fair and was pushed with such energy and tact that Congress finally gave its approval, and the bold engineer not only completed his contract and demonstrated its success, but received the entire sum in consecutive annual payments, extending over something more than twenty years, when the works reverted to the general Government, as provided for in the contract.

While still engaged on the Mississippi River in frequent contact with leading promoters and contractors, my attention was drawn to the great need of railroads in southern Illinois. At that time

only the Illinois Central and the Ohio and Mississippi Railroads had been built and put in operation. Many years before a line had been located from Shawneetown to Alton, near St. Louis, and much work had been done on it, but, like every other enterprise of the time, it fell into bankruptcy and was abandoned in the great financial crisis of 1837, after which the entire region had languished for means of transportation. The country was rich in timber, coal, and agricultural products, but was backward in development for lack of capital and enterprise. Under the inspiring leadership of Stephen A. Douglas, and in spite of alleged leanings toward the South, it had contributed a larger percentage of soldiers than any other portion of the State to the Union army, and with the return of the disbanded volunteers it naturally looked to the outer world for help. My uncle, who was at that time the largest landholder and the richest man in that part of the State, and, therefore, greatly interested in improvement, sought to interest me in building a railroad from St. Louis to my native town. He represented the various counties through which the road would run as willing under the railroad laws of the State passed in 1869 to advance their credit and issue bonds in aid of the enterprise. But what was still more surprising was the fact that, while they were ready to subscribe the full face of the bonds to the stock of the railroad company, they would give it to me if I would successfully finance, build, and equip the railroad. It was a favorable and flattering offer, and, as it was my purpose to leave the army if I could find a suitable opening, I immediately sent contractors to look over the route and give me their

conclusion as to its merits and their figures as to the probable cost of the railroad. On receipt of favorable reports, I notified the parties in interest that I would take up the enterprise and put it through if I could get the coöperation of General Winslow, who, it will be remembered, had rebuilt and reopened the Atlanta and Chattanooga Railroad under my direction. As Winslow was at that time engaged in building the Vandalia Railroad, he was obliged to delay till he leased it to the Pennsylvania Company. This was done in 1869, shortly after which we took up the new project, which we designated the St. Louis and Southeastern Railway. The whole enterprise was soon on its feet, and, like many others of the day, it grew into notice under our direction. We found it advisable to extend the main line to Evansville, in the southwestern corner of Indiana, a large and flourishing city on the Ohio River, with a branch through the Saline coal field to Shawneetown. Evansville had already voted a large cash subsidy, which, after a sharp contention with the late Samuel J. Tilden and his agents, also passed into our control, principally on the ground that Evansville, having already been connected with Chicago, now wished to establish rail connection with St. Louis, to which our line was the direct route.

The negotiations with the city authorities and leading men were by no means easily carried through. We were comparatively unknown in the business world, and had to have the support of influential outsiders. Fortunately, my friend, Major Samuel K. Casey, the first citizen of Mount Vernon, an interior town on the line to St. Louis, came

willingly to our assistance. He had known me always, and after an adroit and strenuous appeal in behalf of the proposition my associate and I had submitted, concluded somewhat as follows: "And now, gentlemen, I hope you will close with my friends. I know they will do as they say and fulfill all promises to the letter. We Democrats over in Illinois"—then pausing and looking gravely over the assembled notables, nearly all of whom were of the same political faith, he added—"I hope I offend no one by the use of that word—but, gentlemen, that's my persuasion—we Democrats over in Illinois, whenever we find men who will stand without hitching, we are willing to trust them to the end. And now if you will close the contract with these young men, I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll come over here from Mount Vernon and buy the very last one of my catfish from you!"

It is needless to add that this appeal was received with applause and was followed shortly by a formal contract which gave the subsidies of both city and county, amounting to something over a half million dollars, to the St. Louis and Southeastern Railway, which was promptly completed and put into operation.

This business soon absorbed most of my time, and, as the local subscriptions were not sufficient to pay for more than the right of way and the grading, it became necessary to mortgage the property for enough to buy the rails, crossties, bridges, stations, and rolling stock. The next thing was to sell the bonds and this fell to my lot.

About that time Congress reduced the army and I availed myself of that opportunity to put in my

resignation (December 31, 1870), which I phrased "to be in effect from the date hereof till the beginning of the next war to which the United States might be a party." Fortunately, the surveys and government work with which I had been charged, especially the improvement of the Des Moines and Rock Island Rapids, were so far advanced that the plans could not be changed. But to prevent this and to secure their completion I was retained as consulting engineer for a year or two longer.

Although my pursuits in civil life absorbed my entire time and attention, they did not prevent my consideration for public office. Shortly after returning from Europe, in 1873, I was asked semi-officially if I would accept the commissionership of Internal Revenue, but, regarding the private station as the post of honor, in times such as then prevailed, I gave the matter no consideration, and never from that time to this have I sought civil office. My personal relations, however, with Grant and his official household, as well as with the members of his cabinet, continued on an intimate footing till well toward the end of his second term, and it is a gratifying circumstance that I retained his approval to the end as a military man. This is confirmed by the fact that Mr. Fish, who had been his secretary of state, asked him a decade later what the country would have done for army commanders in case of the death of Sherman, Sheridan, and Schofield. To this the General replied that there were others coming forward who could quite well fill their places, and then named "Upton, McKenzie, and Wilson," in the order given.[1]

[1] See Hamilton Fish on Grant—*The Independent*, July 30, 1885.

Removing to New York early in 1871, I was elected a member of the principal clubs and through George Opdyke, the late mayor, Governor Morgan, Commodore Vanderbilt, and Colonel Cannon, I made the acquaintance of Jacob H. Schiff, Morton, Bliss and Company, Seligman Brothers and Company, Naylor and Company, Morris K. Jessup and Company, Perkins, Livingston and Post, the Grant Locomotive Works, Rogers Locomotive Works, Baldwin Locomotive Works, the principal car-building companies, and many other firms prominent in the various branches of railroad exploitation. My acquaintance with Mr. Opdyke, Mr. Jessup, Mr. Schiff, Mr. R. Suydam Grant and many others in New York and Europe, ripened into friendship which has lasted unbroken save by death to the present day.

At that time all rails and fastenings as well as a large portion of the capital necessarily came from Europe. I made my first and second visits to England and the Continent with Mr. Schiff for the purpose of selling bonds, and in two years Winslow and I built and equipped two hundred miles of railroad in Illinois and Indiana and acquired one hundred and fifty more by purchase and consolidation in Kentucky and Tennessee, which gave us the shortest line from St. Louis as well as from Chicago to Nashville and beyond. Although the gauge changed at the Ohio River from four feet nine inches to five feet south of that river, it was the first railroad in the United States to run loaded cars both ways without breaking bulk between the Northern and Southern states. It penetrated a rich and undeveloped coal field both in Kentucky and Illinois, passed through heavily timbered districts, and connected widely

separated regions for the interchange of fuel, lumber, farm products, and merchandise.

During the same period we took over and built the Cairo and Vincennes Railroad in connection with General Burnside and his friends under contract with the Pennsylvania system to the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers at Cairo. Winslow was as able and energetic a railroad builder as he was a soldier, and everything seemed going our way. The roads were properly located, rapidly and economically built. Every dollar of the subscriptions as well as the proceeds of all the bonds went honestly into the roads and their equipment. Neither of us received salaries, but both depended solely upon the stocks we were to receive under our contract for compensation, and with the unusual success of our operations it looked as though the stocks would enrich us. Of course, we divided with our bankers with a fair margin of profit for all, and everything went on swimmingly till the crash of 1873, which carried down every uncompleted railroad in the country. The most promising and those most nearly completed went with such as had not yet been fairly started. The Northern Pacific, the Union Pacific, the Texas Pacific, and the Wabash shared the fate of the Ontario and Western, the St. Louis and Southeastern, the Cairo and Vincennes, and scores of others, all of which were overwhelmed in bankruptcy and ruin. It was a period of widespread distress during which there was no immunity either for new corporations or new contractors. All suffered alike.

During its first years our consolidated road earned a considerable surplus above operating and

interest charges, and even in the hard times its traffic continued so large that we felt sure it would carry us through. But it was still the age of unregulated competition and arbitrary management in which each railroad was a rule unto itself and self-preservation was regarded by all as the first law of nature. Our through cars south from Nashville ran over the Louisville and Nashville and the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroads and their connections, and when the pinch of hard times came, which commenced with the failure of Jay Cooke and Company, these railroads shut off our through traffic to the last car and the last pound of freight, and as there was no statute law against this, in spite of our urgent appeals to equity in the U. S. circuit courts at Louisville and Nashville, they completely destroyed our business and our revenues and thereby forced us into default and into the hands of a receiver. While in due time I became receiver and general manager, the Southeastern Railway finally passed into the control of the Louisville and Nashville by purchase after foreclosure, which wiped out both stock and bonds. The road they covered now constitutes the principal connection of that flourishing system to Chicago, St. Louis, and the Northwest, and for many years has earned and paid both interest and dividends on a much larger amount of money than it cost, thus fully justifying its construction and the hopes which we entertained of its usefulness and profit.

My connection with it brought me but one consolation. The country it served has made great strides in wealth, education, and refinement. The interior counties were then the home of idleness, and

often of drunkenness and violence. The churches were neglected and the schools comparatively empty. Now and for many years all this is changed. The lands have been drained, churches built, streets paved, schools opened and prosperity established on every hand. Population has doubled, villages have become towns and towns enterprising cities. Prohibition is the rule, violence and even litigation are hardly known, and contentment, progress, and plenty are found from the Mississippi to the Cumberland. The greater part of the praise for all this is due to the railroads. They let the light through, aroused ambitions, and furnished markets, while the people did the rest. The transformation which is complete came as though by magic. The region prospered. The bankers and contractors alone suffered loss.

My unfortunate experiences in that field convinced me that something more than the common law was necessary for the regulation of railroads, and from the day of our break with our Southern connections, I saw the necessity for a national law compelling all railroads engaged in interstate commerce to make physical connection with the tracks of all connecting and intersecting railways, to issue and participate in through bills of lading, to give prompt dispatch to business from whatever source, to make fair and equitable rates to all and to discriminate against none. I had studied the Constitution of the United States as well as all the great commentaries upon it. I was familiar with the common and the statute law for the regulation of common carriers, and while I was reluctant to invoke national legislation to compel just and fair treatment, I saw no other means of dealing adequately

with the far-reaching abuses, of which my associates and I were the innocent victims. In the midst of my employments I wrote many times to friends in Congress and in the newspaper world supporting and invoking the right of Congress to regulate commerce between the states. Later I went before the committees of both Houses and stated my case as strongly as the facts would allow and yet opposing any law which did not apply equally to foreign and inter-state railroads, doing business with or forming links in railroads between one section of the country and another, and especially along the Canadian border. Senator Cullom and Senator Reagan openly expressed their approval of my views, declaring that they were with me "all along the line of my argument," and yet they were unable to incorporate the restrictions I pointed out in the act which ultimately became the law. It has been amended if not improved in many particulars since, and while I was one of the first, if not the very first railroad manager, to urge such a measure upon the attention of Congress, it came far too late to benefit the railroads in which I was so largely interested. The effects of the law and the restoration of confidence and prosperity were too slow to save my interest or any part of it from the general wreck. I held that the mortgages should have absolute priority over the shares of the stockholders, no matter how much money or labor had been paid for the stock. The day had not yet come for recognizing such equities, and all the stockholders were ruthlessly wiped out. It was not till a good many years later that stockholders were recognized and taken into account in the new schemes of capitalization.

Meanwhile many millions of honest money and much honest work were foreclosed out of existence and it is this fact which has always made me believe that our railroads are on the whole far from being overcapitalized.

My only consolation is that I gained a great deal of useful experience, and with the loyal help of my associates made good my undertakings. I had had some influence in ending the abuses of which I complained, and I am sure they can never be again practised or directed against those who come after us. A great country like ours still affords splendid opportunities and holds out great inducements for the capital and enterprise which are necessary for the development of its resources. With their encouraging stimulus its citizens may put forth their noblest efforts with the assurance that it is rarely ever necessary to do more than lay down general rules for the regulation and control of its enterprises to insure an equal opportunity and fair treatment for all.

During my railroad life from 1870 to 1883, a period of thirteen years, I lived in New York, St. Louis, and Chicago. In the earlier part of that period I became associated with George M. Pullman and Henry M. Alexander as an active promoter of the New York Elevated Railway, and after several visits to Europe and many changes of plan took charge of its construction as general manager and chief engineer. In the latter capacity I controlled the plans and awarded the contracts for the section between Rector Street and Central Park, and with the help of my able chief assistant, Mr. William F. Shunk, I regulated all and devised many of the

details of structure, track, stations, locomotives, and cars, none of which have ever failed, but all of which have stood the test of daily use for many years. It was a pioneer work and has been imitated in its principal features by all similar undertakings down to the present day.

At a pause in its plans and construction I found it necessary to take the receivership and management of the Southeastern Railway in which I had a much larger interest. Having wound up that business and transferred the railroad to its purchaser, I accepted the vice-presidency and presidency in turn, of the New York and New England Railroad and, after buying one hundred and three acres of the South Boston flats for its eastern terminal and extending it as a trunk line to Fishkill and Newburg on the Hudson, thus making it a competitive road for the principal cities of New England, the group I was associated with gave up control and, although rich enough to hold it, allowed the system with a greater mileage than any other in New England, to pass into the hands of the New York and New Haven Company which had been from the first its most unrelenting and irreconcilable rival. Seeing that this result was inevitable, I gave up my position and in 1883 removed from Boston to Wilmington, Delaware.

This ended the most strenuous period of my business life and although a few years later I became a co-receiver of the Louisville, Evansville and St. Louis Railroad, which I had helped my brother and others to promote and in which I had acquired an interest under a previous foreclosure, I took no part after that in active railroad management.

During my residence in Delaware, I devoted myself to my business interests, to letters, to public affairs, and to travel, visiting Europe, Mexico, Canada, Japan, Formosa, and China,[1] and, although I had many interesting experiences and met many notable men, I have sufficiently described most of them in newspapers, magazines, or books. Before completing this narrative I may refer to others for special reasons, but looking back upon that part of my life as personal rather than public, I pass on to the Spanish War.

[1] "China, Travels in the Middle Kingdom," Appleton & Co.

## XII

### THE SPANISH WAR

Cuba and the Cuban Rebellion—Cane and beet sugar—Spanish oppression—The *Maine* blown up in the harbor of Havana—Declaration of war—Reënter army as senior major general from civil life—Interview with the President—Composition of army.

For over four hundred years Cuba played an important part in the world's history. Discovered in 1492 by Columbus, it was thought for many years to be a part of the Asiatic mainland. Containing approximately forty-four thousand square miles, lying just within the north torrid zone, it is one of the most fertile and productive countries in either hemisphere. Settled and populated by Spain, its growth was never rapid, and this is to be accounted for mainly by the fact that from the date of the expulsion of the Jews and Moors, Spain has always been more or less short of labor.

The native population of Cuba at the time of its discovery was estimated at from two hundred thousand to a million souls, who were first enslaved and then exterminated by forced labor in the search for gold and by diseases introduced by the whites. Their places were gradually filled by negroes, the first of whom were imported in 1501, and with but

little interruption the last in 1880. In this year slavery was abolished by law, but it continued in the remote districts till 1887.

Contrary to the common opinion the proportion of the white population to the colored for the last hundred years at least has stood in the ratio of two to one, and is now gradually on the increase, the last census giving it as 70 to 30. Curiously enough no trace of Indian blood is found in the population. I met one woman in the valley of Manicaragua and the census takers another in the Cienaga de Zapata, showing distinct traces of Indian blood, but neither had children in whom Indian blood could be recognized. There had been an intermixture of the white and negro races and it may be safely said that no Cuban dark enough to be asked his color ever says anything but white. Nevertheless, the white population is largely in excess in all recognizable shades, and as there is but little of the race prejudice that exists in our Southern states, there is a far greater homogeneity than is found in any other Spanish-American country or even in South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, or in Louisiana. Illiteracy does not exist so largely amongst the blacks of Cuba as in any of the states just mentioned, but for three hundred years there were practically no schools in the island and the lack of educational facilities greatly retarded the material prosperity of all classes of native Cubans. Like the colonies of all other countries, those of Spain were established, exploited, and controlled mainly for the benefit of the home government and people, and yet for many years the Cuban trade with Spain languished for the sufficient reason that Spain herself was impover-

ished. Notwithstanding the wealth, which for years poured in from the colonies in exchange for supplies which were frequently got in other countries, Spain became little more than a clearing house for colonial products.

The principal staples of this beautiful and fruitful island are sugar and tobacco, the first a necessity for the world at large, and the second a luxury which required but little skilled labor and no scientific manipulation to prepare it for use. But tropical fruits of all kinds flourish and, with rail and steamship transportation and a remission of duties, might be produced and delivered in the European as well as in the near-by countries in boundless profusion. Even with the oppression and exactions of the mother country the value of the exports from the island per capita were larger than those of any other colony or country in the world, but under the pernicious system in force the profit therefrom was squeezed out of the producers in the shape of taxes and salaries which went to Spain and not to the people of the island. Duties were levied on exports as well as on imports, direct taxes were laid on personal property, industries, trades, and professions, while seal and stamp duties on all kinds of legal papers and business transactions, a municipal tax on the slaughter of cattle as well as a heavy head tax on every immigrant, white or black, were also collected. Having neither banks nor local currency, the financial and commercial difficulties were heavily increased, and when it is considered that the entire system of government and administration was monopolized by the Spanish officials to the exclusion of natives, sufficient reason will be

seen for the discontentment of the Cuban people. From 1821 down to the beginning of the last rebellion in 1895, it may be truthfully said that the hopes of the Cuban people were directed to independence of Spain and to the establishment of closer trade relations with the rest of the world.

From Jefferson's administration to McKinley's the island of Cuba, lying directly south of Florida, less than a hundred miles away, has always been viewed with interest by the American people. Its position was regarded as the key to the Gulf of Mexico and our southern seaboard, and this caused the possibility of its transfer to any other power to be considered a menace to our paramount interests, which could not be tolerated. As its great productivity became better known, the desire for annexation spread throughout the country, and had it not been for the difficulty between the North and the South in regard to slavery, there can be but little doubt that vigorous and effective measures would have been taken to secure the annexation of the island before the Civil War broke out. Indeed, efforts more or less persistent were made from time to time to purchase the island from the Spanish Government, but, unfortunately, these fell to the ground and the Cuban people were left to struggle on unaided till their burdens became greater than they could bear.

And yet the home Government was not altogether to blame for the condition which prevailed in Cuba. While the Spanish people had had no reformation and no renaissance, they were not materially worse nor much more intolerant than the people of other European countries. Their Government and colonial

system were rotten, while their statesmen and philosophers were backward, if not illiberal. Nor can they be blamed for failing to see what all other nations equally failed to see, namely, the concealed but far-reaching consequences of certain important facts and influences growing out of the wars of the Napoleonic period.

Up to the Battle of Trafalgar, the entire sugar supply of the world came from the tropical islands, but the successful blockade which followed that victory enabled Great Britain to close the ports and coasts of Europe against tropical productions of every kind. And it was this that vitalized the German discovery that the sugar of the carrot and beet was identical with that of sugar cane, but beets carried only four per cent. of extractable sugar, while cane carried ten, and the supply of beets was insignificant. A new industry had to be created. By selection and cultivation the sweetness of the beet was increased to ten, fifteen, twenty and finally, after a hundred years, to twenty-five per cent. in parts of California, while the best sugar cane continued to carry only ten or twelve per cent. of extractable sugar. With the continental blockade the price of sugar soared in Europe, while ruin stalked abroad in the islands in which it was produced.

Whether the cane-sugar planters knew what had befallen them, or foresaw what would be its effects or their duration is more than doubtful, but it is certain that the Germans, followed quickly by the French, and later by the Russians, did all they could to put the beet sugar business on its feet. Within ten years, from Trafalgar to Waterloo, over six hundred factories were put into successful opera-

tion in Germany and France alone. By 1840 fifty thousand tons of beet-sugar were produced annually and although hundreds of sugar planters had been ruined, the cane-sugar industry was not yet dead. Beet-sugar, stimulated by duties and restrictions on cane-sugar, was annually increasing in output and decreasing in cost throughout Europe. Sugar was no longer a luxury, but had become an article of staple necessity which its cheapness finally put within the reach of all mankind. For the year 1900, the world's sugar output was eight million four hundred and forty-eight thousand and forty-four long tons, of which five million six hundred and eight thousand or a little less than two-thirds were of beet, while two million eight hundred and thirty-nine thousand were of cane-sugar. This was the high-water mark of beet-sugar. Since the independence and pacification of Cuba, the output of cane-sugar has been relatively increasing. For the year 1909-10 the total output of sugar was fourteen million eight hundred and ninety thousand long tons, of which seven million nine hundred and thirty-five thousand were of cane and six million seven hundred and fifteen thousand were of beet-sugar. For the first time in this decade the output of cane passed that of beet-sugar in 1908. The crop year of 1910-11 gave a still greater relative output of cane-sugar.

At the beginning of this revolution in one of the world's great industries, the price of raw sugar was something like $.20 a pound or $450 a ton. From that date till the end of the Spanish War it went down till it sold at $40 per ton at the plantation. It has even touched $35 per ton more than

once during the previous twenty years. For most of the last hundred years the war between beet- and cane-sugar was a war without mercy or quarter, during which the plotted curve of prices is a descending one every subdivision of which is marked with the ruin of sugar-cane planters throughout the world.

Although the sugar industry started in Cuba as early as 1523, it was not till the end of two centuries that the output reached twenty-five thousand, and not till 1750 that it reached seventy-five thousand tons per year. At the end of another hundred years it had reached three hundred and twenty thousand tons. During the next sixteen years it gradually increased to seven hundred and fifty thousand tons. But this was a period of high prices and great improvements in grinding the cane, converting the *begasse* or fiber into fuel and extracting the sugar, but it was offset by a period during which the annual exactions of Spain amounted to an average of $5,000,000 in excess of the official budget. With these exactions a third of the Cuban planters were driven into bankruptcy, which in turn threw both skilled and unskilled laborers by the thousand out of employment. And it was this state of affairs, and not any special or unusual oppression or any new form of outrage and wrong which drove the Cuban people into poverty and insurrection.

The first Cuban Republic was proclaimed at Yara in 1868, and the struggle which followed lasted with varying fortunes and inconclusive results till 1878. Carlos Manuel Cespedes was the president and Maximo Gomez, who had experience in the Spanish army as a non-commissioned officer, became the active

leader. The fierce but desultory struggle was confined mostly to the Eastern provinces, and was finally ended by a series of concessions and stipulations on both sides, with the payment of a considerable sum of money to the insurgent leaders, as provided in the so-called Capitulation of Zanjon.

Without dwelling on the settlement which each party charged the other with violating, it is certain that the war cost both Cuba and the mother country an enormous sum in property as well as in money, and that on this account Spain added $300,000,000 to the public debt, thus bringing it fully up to $400,000,000 or to $283 per capita, all of which was charged to Cuba. What was worse, Spain insisted upon adding the interest on the same to the Cuban budget, already far greater than the Cuban people with the decreasing profits of their principal business could bear.

To make a deplorable case desperate, a further fall in the price of sugar took place in 1884, which brought another crop of planters to ruin and continued the depression till the American Congress put the Blaine system of reciprocity into effect. As this admitted Cuban sugar into the States without duty, the crop rapidly responded to the magic touch of free trade till it reached its maximum of one million fifty-four thousand two hundred and fourteen tons in 1895. But, unfortunately, the competition with beet-sugar at the same time grew fiercer and fiercer till it finally culminated with the repeal of the reciprocity arrangements during Cleveland's second term, in an apparently complete victory for beet-sugar. Our part in the battle was the straw which broke the camel's back and whelmed both the

surviving planters and the common people of Cuba in ruin.

In a storm of fury against Spanish oppression, and apparently in entire ignorance of the fatal blow we had struck their most flourishing industries, the second rebellion broke out in 1895, under Cisneros, Maso, Marti, Gomez, and Maceo. Although the insurgents were poorly prepared to carry on war against Spain, the infuriated combatants with torch and machete, small arms and artillery soon had the beautiful island ablaze and running with blood from end to end. Industry ceased, idleness became the rule, the rate of wages for the few workmen still employed fell to a nominal figure, the cost of living rose and the output of sugar dwindled in a single season to a little more than two hundred thousand tons. Spain had filled Cuba with soldiers while the Cuban leaders had called every unemployed man to the banner of his country. Every "central" that could not pay tribute to both sides was burned, the cane-fields were fired and all the cattle that could be found were driven away, slain and eaten. No animal escaped. Nothing that could be eaten was spared. The infuriated forces vied with each other in the work of destruction, each declaring its purpose to make the island valueless to the other. Spain in her desperation increased her army of occupation as fast as the ships could bring them over to full two hundred thousand men, a force amply sufficient to sweep the country from side to side and from end to end as rapidly as the troops could march had it been possible for them to march at all. The most that the invaders could do was to occupy the principal cities and towns, driving the people from the neighboring

farmhouses and cabins and shutting them up within fortified limits so restricted that it was impossible for them to find food enough to keep body and soul together.

This cruel and infamous practice became known as "Reconcentration," the poor victims of which, called *"Reconcentrados,"* died by thousands from starvation and disease. According to the best evidence obtainable, the population of the island was reduced by these means fully two hundred thousand, before the practice was abandoned and succor came to the suffering Cubans. A cry of horror went up against the inhuman policy all over the world, but Spain, as long as Weyler held command, was inexorable. It may be truthfully said that Spain was also powerless to carry on the war in civilized fashion, not that she was short of men or resources, but that her rapacity and misrule for four hundred years had been such as to sweep all the surplus wealth out of the island into her own coffers instead of leaving a reasonable part for building turnpikes and railroads. Had she located and constructed a central highway of either sort from the ends of the island to Havana, with branches from the principal ports, she could easily have overwhelmed the Cuban rebellion before the nearest outside power could have gone to its assistance.

The American people from Maine to California and from St. Paul to New Orleans without reference to party were outraged by the cruel policy of the Spanish Captain General. The adventurous reporter never better displayed his enterprise than in the accounts he gave of the sufferings inflicted on the Cuban people. Food, clothing, and medicines

were sent by shiploads to the suffering Reconcentrados, and curiously enough the Spanish authorities amiably assisted the Red Cross in distributing them to the sick and starving Cubans. Scores of enthusiastic young Americans had flocked to the standard of the insurgents, and the conviction was spreading like wildfire throughout the States that the Cuban Republic should be recognized, and if that should not prove sufficient, that the Spanish forces should be driven out of the island at the point of the bayonet. But notwithstanding the excitement, both the President and Congress proceeded with deliberation. Both recognized the gravity of the situation and honestly strove to avoid war. In memory of our own great rebellion they were loath to recognize the new Republic or to intervene for the expulsion of the Spaniards and the reëstablishment of peace. They offered the country's "good offices" but the hour had not yet come for their acceptance. Although the disturbance in the house of the next door neighbor was intolerable and ought to be suppressed as a matter of common right, they were reluctant to play the part of policeman.

As time passed, however, the row seemed to subside from within, but this was doubtless due more to the exhaustion and powerlessness of the combatants than to a disposition on either part to reach a just and peaceable settlement. The enormous expense coupled with the impossibility of concentrating their forces and of conducting successful operations in the interior appeared to be dawning at last upon both the Captain General and the home Government.

But as yet neither Spain nor the outer world seemed to understand that the underlying cause of

the rebellion was primarily economic and not altogether political. While it was true that Spain's dominion on this side of the Atlantic was regarded by many as an anachronism, and that Cuba had a pardonable desire for independence, no one seemed to recognize the deep-seated and fatal cause of her discontentment. No political economist had yet discovered that the island and its people were hopelessly bankrupt. No statesman had perceived that they paid willingly so long as they had profit enough to defray the cost of production including taxes and extraordinary exactions and leave a reasonable surplus behind. No governor general and no Spanish minister had suggested that Cuba could not possibly continue to pay after its business had been destroyed and its debt had become greater than it could carry. No accountant had discovered that its surplus had already given place to a deficit that it could not make good or that financial ruin was stalking abroad in the land. Strangely enough no American from the President down seems to have got the faintest glimpse of the real trouble, and thus Spaniards, Cubans, and Americans alike were drifting helplessly and unconsciously toward a catastrophe which shocked the world and led ultimately at a great cost of life and money to only a partial amelioration of conditions rather than to a radical cure of the deep-seated disease.

This was the general situation when the tragic event to which I allude took place, fixing if not changing the course of history. For the protection if not at the direct request of Consul General Fitzhugh Lee and the American residents of Cuba, the Washington administration, acting entirely within

its discretion but, as the outside world thought, without sufficient justification, sent the battleship *Maine* to Havana where she was received with proper if not effusive respect. An advantageous anchorage was assigned to her, but shortly afterward this was changed. Then came an explosion blowing out her bottom and causing her to sink before a large part of the crew, which were below deck, could escape. This occurred on February 15, 1898, at about ten o'clock at night. The dull heavy rumble of the explosion was heard ashore, and when its cause was ascertained the news was flashed by cable and telegraph to all parts of the world. While there was no positive proof, the suspicion was almost irresistible that the disaster was the result of hostile design and not of accident. A board of naval officers investigated the matter as best they could, and although they got nothing but circumstantial evidence, they expressed the opinion that the ship had been blown up by a torpedo or sub-marine mine directed or planted by the hands of the Spaniards. The Spanish authorities were swift to deny the charge. They were also swift to make an investigation which, without throwing any positive light upon the tragic incident, expressed the counter opinion that the battleship was sunk by an explosion from within. It is, however, worthy of note that the American solution of the mystery has finally been confirmed by a new board of army and navy experts, who made a careful examination and survey of the hulk after it had been laid bare within a coffer dam constructed for the purpose of removing it from the harbor.

A wave of excitement swept over the country

when the news of the disaster came to hand. Many newspapers and many congressmen clamored for an immediate declaration of war. But the President and the cooler heads, knowing that the country was not prepared for extreme measures, did all they could to make delay. Diplomacy was called upon again to do its work. An armistice with a revocation of the order of reconcentration was suggested to be followed by a fair and honorable peace between the belligerents. Counter propositions followed; a meeting of ambassadors in Washington offered the good offices of the European Governments; Spain proclaimed an armistice, revoked its order of reconcentration, appropriated money to assist in relieving the suffering Cubans, and finally took measures to establish an autonomous government in the island; but it all came too late. The conviction that Spaniards if not the Spanish government had blown up the *Maine,* was too strong to permit an impartial arbitration. McKinley had stood firmly for peace up to that time, but his position now became uncertain. Whether he sincerely wished for peace, or was working for delay in the hope that he would be better prepared for war, remains a matter of doubt to the present day. He was naturally a timid man if not an opportunist. Although his service in the War for the Union began with the humble rank of commissary sergeant and ended with that of brevet major on the staff, there is reason for believing that he regarded himself like many another distinguished civilian, as in fact a great military organizer and administrator. And yet in calling an ex-colonel of volunteers who, although reinstated, had been summarily dismissed from the army a third of a cen-

tury before, to the high position of secretary of war merely because he had become rich and had made large contributions to pay the personal debts and campaign expenses of the presidential candidate, he had rudely shaken the confidence of the try as well as of the army in his discretion and judgment. But he was both president and commander-in-chief and the war with all of its uncertainties was not only on but under his supreme direction.

Although I knew as little as any one else at that day as to the misrule and economic ruin in Cuba, I had sympathized deeply with her from the day of the first rebellion and wanted to see her freed from Spanish tyranny and annexed to the United States. I, therefore, made haste to offer my services to the Government, and in doing so called special attention to the fact that my resignation from the army in 1870 was by its terms to remain in effect for the interval of peace which might elapse between the date thereof and the beginning of the next war to which the United States were a party. In due course I notified the Adjutant General that I was ready to accept any rank and command which might be assigned to me with due regard to my past services.

Shortly afterward I was invited to the executive mansion, and on my arrival with Corbin, the Adjutant General, the President, whom I knew well, and who received me most cordially, told me that he had placed my name at the head of the list of major generals to be appointed from civil life. He then showed me his list and asked me what I thought of it. As a cursory examination revealed that he had left off several of the best men of the old army, notably Ames, Fitzhugh, and Hall, still in their prime, and

also Basil Duke of the Confederate army, to all of whose merits I called special attention, he said at once that he would put them on the next list. They were notified at once and so far as they were ready to accept, he sent their names to the Senate for confirmation, in due time.

Thus, by my appointment and previous services, I became the senior major general from civil life. Fitzhugh Lee and Joseph Wheeler had also graduated at West Point and held commissions in the regular army before they went into the Rebellion, but with my longer service and higher rank in the old army, I had precedence over them. The first five army corps were assigned to the senior regular officers of continuous service. The sixth fell to my lot and the seventh to Lee's, but when it came to the actual reorganization of the new army all the corps, except mine, were filled up. A full staff of able and acceptable regulars for the chief places, competent to administer an army of two hundred thousand men, was detailed and promptly reported to me at Camp Thomas, Chickamauga Park. They were Lieutenant Colonel Tasker H. Bliss, of the regular artillery, Lieutenant Colonel Wilber E. Wilder, of the cavalry; Lieutenant Colonel Avery D. Andrews, lately of the artillery; Lieutenant Colonel John Biddle and Major Clement A. F. Flagler, of the engineers; Lieutenant Colonel Henry D. Borup, of the ordnance; Lieutenant Colonel Reber, of the signal corps; Major Eli D. Hoyle and Captain Arthur Murray, of the artillery, and Captain Helmick, of the infantry. Later Colonels McClernand, Dorst, Greble, Craig, and Cecil, all regular officers of the highest character and great experience, came to me in turn.

From civil life came Colonels Hull and Hill, Majors Carlton, Vernadoe, Parkhill, and McMichael; Captains Allison, Breckenridge, Hewitt, and Latrobe; and Lieutenants Black, Fullington, and Titus, each of whom showed himself steady, honest, patriotic, and faithful to the duties which fell to his lot.

But with all this array of experience, talent, and ambition not a single regiment or battery was ever assigned to the Sixth Corps. While I never made inquiry or asked for an explanation, I have always felt that the failure to fill up the Sixth Corps was very unfair to me and was due to political pull or influence or possibly to Alger's hostility which might have worked as much disadvantage to the country as to myself had the war been mainly on the land or seriously protracted on either land or sea. As it turned out, the Spaniards were as unready as we were and no ill effects can rightly be ascribed to our War Department's partiality and favoritism whatever may have been their origin.

There was a good deal of comment, however, during the entire war amongst the West Pointers and other observant men on the fact that both the President and the Secretary of War as well as the General-in-Chief, the Adjutant General, and all the generals commanding expeditions were civilians or officers appointed to the regular army from civil life or from the volunteers. The President, the Secretary of War, Generals Miles, Corbin, Shafter, Chaffee, Young, Lawton, Brooke, Coppinger, Wade, and Bates, as well as Colonels Roosevelt and Wood, belonged to this class. With the exception of Lee and myself, no West Pointer had corps rank and none received the command of an independent ex-

pedition. It all looks as if it was the deliberate purpose to prefer the volunteers and to turn down West Pointers. Inasmuch as I was the only surviving general of the Civil War still below the retiring age, who had commanded an army in independent operations, and was besides the only one of any grade who had accompanied a great military expedition by sea to its objective base of operations, my friends thought it strange that I should not have been assigned to chief command in the Cuban or Porto Rican operations. General G. M. Dodge of the Sixteenth Army Corps in the Civil War had been offered and declined the rank of major general in the Spanish War, but took the liberty of telling the President that he had only one officer of high rank fitted by experience and character for the command of an independent expedition, or army, and that officer was General Wilson. This was without my knowledge or connivance and did not become known to me till long after the confusion and mismanagement attending the embarkation and disembarkation of the expedition to Santiago had become a military scandal. Later when charged with the transfer of a part of the First Division by ship to Porto Rico, I made requisition for the proper flat-bottomed scows and motor boats to disembark my command promptly and expeditiously, but my requisitions were quietly ignored, and the expedition was sent to an unknown coast with nothing but the ship's yawls or row boats to land the troops. It is needless to add that the landing would have been greatly delayed if not rendered impossible had the enemy been strong and determined enough to make a stand at Ponce.

It is just such ignorance and neglect that bring our War Department into discredit, subject our commanders to criticism and contempt and endanger the success of their operations. It is safe to add that all the confusion and delay in landing and most of the exposure and sickness of the Santiago expedition, ending in the scandalous round robin and the withdrawal of the Fifth Corps from Cuba as unable to keep the field with less than thirty days' campaign duty to its credit, were due to the ignorance and inexperience of its leading officers. It is inconceivable that an invading army composed of good volunteers properly commanded, should have been reduced in so short a time to the helpless condition set forth in the round robin. It is inconceivable that it could not have continued indefinitely in the field in spite of its sick and wounded, had proper provision been made or proper measures taken by officers of experience to provide for its health, subsistence, and transportation. When we recall that an Anglo-American expedition made up mostly of colonial militia carried by sailing ships, captured and held Havana for over six months in 1762, it will be difficult to understand how an army of the present time transported rapidly and comfortably to destination by steamer could have been placed *hors du combat* by a few weeks' service about Santiago in 1898. Who the author of the round robin was is not definitely known, though I am sure it could not have been drawn up by an officer of experience nor signed by those who did sign it had they been free from panic and demoralization.

But it is not my purpose to give an outline, much less a detailed history of the Spanish War, the for-

tunate ending of which was due more to the unreadiness and inefficiency of the Spanish army and navy, than to the superior organization and management of our own. While our navy was then as always, from the date of its earliest existence, a well-trained and efficient organization in which both rank and file were regulars with no volunteers amongst them, it was fully abreast, ship for ship, gun for gun, and man for man, with the best navy of the times. success at Manila was generally regarded by other nations as a "scratch," but when Sampson's fleet destroyed the Spanish fleet coming out of Santiago Harbor, it is safe to say that a cold chill went down the back of every naval power in the world. Although our English cousins professed to rejoice with us, there is good reason for saying that they were particularly skeptical in reference to American gunners and gunnery. Captain Paget, naval attaché at my headquarters, in discussing the naval victory off Santiago at my mess table, was indiscreet enough to attribute our success to the statement that we had got all of our best gunners from the English navy. This was so far from the truth as well as so lacking in politeness that I replied, possibly with some heat: "I suppose you will say that the capture of the *Serapis* by the *Bon Homme Richard,* the *Guerrière* by the *Constitution,* Macdonough's victory of Lake Champlain, and Perry's victory of Lake Erie were also due to the same cause?"

Whatever may have been the merits of this retort it silenced the captain and was evidently regarded by other naval guests as disposing of the claim, that our recent naval victories were due in any degree to English gunners.

But to return to my personal narrative. Having been for a second time appointed a major general of volunteers on May 4, 1898, I took post two weeks later at Camp Thomas, Chickamauga Park, with my able staff of regulars and volunteers, for the purpose of organizing and commanding the Sixth Army Corps in pursuance of my assignment. I selected an advantageous camp on the old battlefield of Chickamauga and at once put the regular officers to teaching the volunteers the practices and duties of military life. They were an able and brilliant lot who made enthusiastic and rapid progress in learning their new duties. Having named Lieutenant Colonel Tasker H. Bliss, United States Volunteers, of the regular artillery, an officer of rare ability and learning, as chief-of-staff, the task and responsibility of getting its members into working order rested mainly on him, though the technical instruction of those from civil life fell mostly upon Lieutenant Colonel Biddle and his able assistant, Major Flagler of the Engineer Corps. They opened at once a staff school for the purpose of giving systematic instruction, and by earnest devotion to the students soon reported them as nearly ready for field service as they could be without the practical experience of actual war. With all branches of service and administration thoroughly provided for, it would have been a great pleasure to organize my share of the raw volunteers, which the President had called out, into an efficient army corps, but, as previously explained, no troops were ever assigned to the Sixth Corps. Its only existence was on paper.

But neither I nor my officers were willing to remain idle and, therefore, we offered ourselves to

General Brooke commanding the camp as well as the First Army Corps, for the command and instruction of his First Division. This he cheerfully accepted, and from that day till the end of the war we were fully employed. The Division was composed of excellent officers and men mostly from the National Guard, who threw themselves heartily into the task of transforming it as nearly as possible into a division of regulars. The camp was beautiful and abundantly supplied with excellent water from Crawfish Springs, the drills and exercises were fully within the capacity of men and officers, and the work at hand went on with as much regularity and as much to my satisfaction as it could have done had I devoted my whole life to the army instead of leaving it nearly a third of a century before. Such is the force of systematic military education and experience, and so different are the occupations and habits of civil life, that it seemed to me as though I had merely returned from a short leave of absence and was resuming my daily routine just where I left off many years before. One of my regular staff remarked that in this respect I had apparently forgotten nothing but had learned much while in civil life.

## XIII

### CAMP THOMAS, CHICKAMAUGA

Volunteered to command First Division, First Army Corps —Santiago Campaign—Ordered to Porto Rico by the way of Charleston—Waiting for transports—Hospitality of Charleston.

While the bustle and excitement of the Spanish War in its opening days centered around Tampa and the force gathering there under Shafter, the Administration's favorite commander, chosen doubtless because he was of Michigan antecedents by a Michigan secretary of war, the life at Camp Thomas was by no means a quiet one. It had been the intention of the Government to make it the camp of instruction for three army corps, the First, Third, and Sixth, or in all about one hundred thousand men under Brooke, Wade, and myself. As it turned out, this intention was partly realized only in respect to the First and Third Corps, and as my lot was soon cast in with the First, I became absorbed in its work and history. After Brooke was named governor general of Porto Rico I succeeded Breckenridge in the command of the First Corps and my story henceforth is rather of what might have been than of the important events which actually took place.

Brooke, whom I had met casually in the Army of the Potomac many years before, was a handsome man of fine figure, great dignity and impressive carriage. Having won his way by hard fighting and exemplary conduct from the command of a regiment of Pennsylvania volunteers to the command of a fine division, he was appointed to the regular army at the close of the war, and had risen to high rank and command not only by seniority but by excellent service and behavior. No finer specimen of a seasoned veteran could be found in ours or in any other service. He was an officer of correct habits, unimpaired powers, and deliberate judgment, but made no claim to unusual ability and still less to military genius. He was a general of real modesty but, withal, an excellent disciplinarian who not only required obedience to his own orders but gave prompt and unquestioning obedience to those in authority over him. He was, besides, fully able with proper instructions from those above to perform all the duties of any command to which he might be assigned either in the field or in the cabinet. In short, he was the superior in rank and in every other respect, unless I except the knowledge of medicine and surgery, to either the officer who received precedence over him then, or to the one who superseded him later in Cuba.

It was a pleasure to serve under and to assist such an officer, and had the Government appreciated his character and quality at their real value, or taken him into its confidence in respect to its plans and policies, there can be no doubt that he would have carried out his orders to the letter without giving the slightest cause for criticism or complaint.

It will be remembered that he was the first governor general of Porto Rico after it passed under our control, and was transferred soon after the Treaty of Peace with Spain to the same position in the island of Cuba. At the end of a year's loyal, if not brilliant service, he was relieved of his high office by an officer who had won favor in Washington of the President and other high officials. This officer had within the short space of two years been raised from the humble rank of captain in the Medical Corps, through that of colonel and brigadier, to major general and governor general of Cuba, not only over the head of Brooke and all the other corps and division commanders, but over the heads of some six hundred other regular officers, his seniors in service, rank, and military merit. It was a most remarkable case of favoritism which could not have occurred in any other country except in case of revolution. Brooke bore the humiliation without a word of official remonstrance, but his closest friends know that he felt the injustice like a blow in the face.

As long as I remained under the immediate command of General Brooke, it was my custom to pay my respects with my staff in uniform, fully mounted and accompanied by our orderlies, every afternoon between four and five o'clock for the purpose of conferring with him and receiving his orders for the next day. I am surely within bounds when I add that he looked forward to my daily visit with as much pleasure and satisfaction as I did. At all events, our service at Camp Thomas was the beginning of a friendship which has lasted to the present time without a cloud, and I am sure will continue

unbroken to the end. Happy is the country that is served by such officers as Brooke in its high places of power and responsibility. A true and loyal soldier without fear and without reproach, sound, healthy, and capable, he discharged the duties of his high position efficiently and well, and when it is considered that he had received no special instructions from the Government, and had no intimation of its policy if it had one, the student of history will find it difficult to account for his relief from command in Cuba by a junior who had had but little experience except as a subordinate department commander in that military division.

Of course, the principal interest in our camp at Chickamauga Park was the force gathering at Tampa. While its destination was unknown outside of the Washington authorities, the common supposition was that it was for the invasion of Cuba, and all the principal officers were anxious to join it. This kept us more or less in a state of change and excitement. Leading generals, with us one day, would be gone the next. First Wheeler, the ex-Confederate anxious to rehabilitate himself as a loyal officer, and then Lawton, the veteran frontiersman who needed no rehabilitation, but merely a chance to show what he could do as a leader of men. None wanted work in a camp of instruction, but all were looking for a chance in the field. Ernst, the courtly and dignified superintendent from West Point, Sanger, the distinguished artillerist and brigadier general of volunteers, still sound and ambitious, Grant, long out of service, but now wearing his stars in recognition of his great father, were all hard at work, each hoping that he might be called to the front, and some

perhaps leaving no stone unturned to secure that honor without delay.

In the midst of the anxiety, I devoted myself constantly to getting the First Division "ready to the last linchpin," and for my success in that received Brooke's hearty and affectionate thanks and commendation. After a creditable review on June 12, he said: "You are most helpful to me. I never give the First Division a thought." But it soon became certain that there was anxiety in Washington if not in our camps. The inside history of the embarkation at Tampa was coming to us; we heard that there was much confusion amongst both officers and men, but in view of the fact that not one of them had ever been connected with such an expedition, or had had the slightest experience in that direction, I thought it but natural. Not so with others. Colonel, afterward Major General Weston, deputy commissary general, who was on the ground, outfitting the expedition with food supplies, seeing the confusion and lack of system and remembering his service with me during the closing year of the Civil War, blurted out to Miles, the general-in-chief: "If you want to get things straightened out here you had better send for Wilson and put him in charge. He has had experience."

What impression this remark produced is a matter of conjecture, but a few days later orders came to Brooke to send me with fifteen thousand men to Tampa as soon as practicable. The first expedition had sailed and all the transports were in use. It was, therefore, certain that we could not embark till they returned, but my division was ready and anxious. Not so the authorities. Indeed, they seemed

uncertain as to the course to be pursued, and kept us waiting in camp for ten days. Meanwhile Shafter's expedition had landed at Daiquiri in a still greater state of confusion if possible than when it embarked. Fortunately for the country, however, it was composed mostly of well-trained regulars, according to all accounts the finest body of men the country had ever assembled, amounting, all told, to about fifteen thousand. It had a few regiments of volunteers and two battalions of so-called Rough Riders without horses. The landing was made on an open deep-water beach, and but for the presence of the navy and its small boats would have been seriously delayed, especially if the enemy had made an effective resistance. There were no roads, and this, added to the fact that the commanding general was unfit by excessive obesity for active service, not only delayed the advance but gave it a haphazard character far from reassuring.

It will be recalled that shortly after the landing at Daiquiri and the affairs at Las Guasimas and El Caney, Shafter's main body, under the immediate command of Kent, Hawkins, and Sumner, crossed the San Juan Creek and assaulted and captured the enemy's entrenchments crowning San Juan Heights and covering the city of Santiago. With victory apparently in his grasp, Shafter, losing confidence, if not courage, telegraphed the Secretary of War on July 3, 1898, much to the surprise of all, that he was . . . "seriously considering withdrawing . . . about five miles and taking up a new position on the high ground between San Juan River and Siboney."[1]

In order that this startling proposition, com-

[1] Report of War Department, 1898, Vol. I, part 2, p. 17.

ing so closely upon a notable success, and followed as it was the next day by a hurry call for fifteen thousand more troops,[1] may be clearly understood, it should be stated that Shafter himself had not seen nor directed any part of the assault and knew nothing whatever from personal observation as to the character and value of the position his forces had carried, for the simple reason that his disability was so great that he could neither mount his horse nor go afoot. He had managed to reach El Poso two miles short of and across the valley from the enemy's line of defense, but in so doing had so abraded his abdomen that he was suffering much pain therefrom and not only compelled to confine himself to his tent but to depend entirely upon others for his information, if not for his inspiration.

To add to the confusion, it now appears that both Wood, the colonel, and Roosevelt, the lieutenant colonel of the Rough Riders, were more active, at least with the reporters, and it was this activity that afterward brought them the greatest fame and the highest reward, although it is now known that they took no leading part and rendered no important service whatever in the actual capture of the entrenchments crowning San Juan Heights. It is also certain that they directed their efforts, such as they were, solely against Kettle Hill, which a personal inspection of the ground and an examination of all maps showed to be an outlying, unfortified, and practically undefended knob some seventy or eighty feet high, and fully a half mile to the left front of San Juan Hill and its principal en-

[1] Report of the War Department, 1898, Vol. I, part 2, p. 18, Shafter to Adjutant General, July 4, 1897.

trenchments, from which it is separated by a swamp that could not be crossed and was not flanked till after the enemy beyond had ceased firing and withdrawn from his main defenses.

It was upon the judgment of such officers as these that the fortunes of the United States depended in this campaign. The ranking general had never commanded during his whole life in an important action, and could not direct in this one, because of physical disabilities of a kind which the War Department should have fully understood. Neither Wood nor Roosevelt had ever before seen, much less taken part in a real battle. To make matters worse Young, afterward made lieutenant general without additional service, was too sick to leave the landing in rear, and Wheeler, although present with the troops at the front, was physically disqualified for active service, while Lawton and Chaffee were neutralized in a roundabout march from El Poso to El Caney and back to the main army.

No message of any sort had reached the War Department from Shafter for over twenty-four hours, but the air was filled with "foreboding rumors." Previous dispatches had announced that Shafter and Wheeler, the second in command, and Young, were sick or disqualified for duty, and finally that yellow fever had appeared among the troops. The President and his secretaries were up nearly all night waiting with intense anxiety for tidings, and when Sunday morning opened with no bulletins from the army, the anxiety had spread to the whole country and the situation was justly regarded as one of extraordinary gravity.[1]

[1] "The Spanish American War," by R. A. Alger, secretary of war, &c., Harper & Brothers, pp. 172 *et seq.*

Under these alarming circumstances with the possibility of a national disaster staring them in the face, it is not strange that the Secretary of War in consequence of Shafter's proposed retirement and in compliance with his call the next day for reënforcements, should have telegraphed Brooke, commanding the principal camp of instruction, as he did, to send me with fifteen thousand men as soon as possible to reënforce the army in front of Santiago. As I recall it, this order must have reached Brooke before midnight and me early on the morning of July 4. Of course, it was gladly reeeived and, fortunately, my division had been ready for ten days to entrain as soon as cars could be got for it. Early the same morning Brooke called at my camp, and after we had discussed the situation and settled the plans for a rapid movement to Charleston, where the transports were to meet us, he expressed a soldier's regret that he could not go also. Realizing that if reënforcements were really required at Santiago, we should send all the troops we had ready and thus make sure of the result, and in full sympathy with Brooke's desire to go with them, I suggested that he should notify the War Department that he was ready to follow with the balance of the First Army Corps as rapidly as transportation could be furnished.

But to this the General replied: "The rest of the corps is not ready and I cannot get it ready in time."

"Oh yes, you can; there are over thirty thousand men fully armed and equipped in this camp, and you can follow with them all as soon as I get out of the way with my Division."

"No, that's impossible without breaking into Wade's corps and transferring his best troops to my immediate command."

"Well, why should you not do that? You are in command of this camp, and know better than any one in Washington what its resources are. As the senior officer you are fully entitled to go with them, if you think it best for the country's interests."

"Why, General, you talk as though you would take everything Wade has, including his overcoat, as well as his troops and transportation."

To this I replied: "I certainly would if I thought the country would be benefited by it," and as Wade was present listening with deep interest, I added: "Wade would be just the man not only to approve it, but to offer to go himself in command of a division if permitted to do so."

Thereupon, Wade, who had sat silent, spoke up, like the true soldier he was, expressing his hearty approval of what I had said, and offering to do all in his power to carry it into effect at the earliest possible moment. With this they took their departure together, Brooke looking much happier than when he arrived at my headquarters.

Just what further action Brooke took in the premises I never knew, but I have always assumed that he presented the whole case, exactly as it stood, loyally and promptly to the War Department. At all events, that is what I expected of him, and I am glad to add that he was shortly ordered with another part of his command to Porto Rico. But, fortunately for the country, Shafter, meanwhile, instead of withdrawing from his advanced position, permitted Colonel McClernand, his adjutant general,

in response to the earnest request of that officer, to frame and send a letter to the Spanish commander demanding his surrender, and although he did this in language not as direct or as confident as he might well have used, it was sufficient to change the situation radically. It was followed by further correspondence which led to the immediate withdrawal of the foreigners from the city, to the maintenance of the army's advanced position and of Shafter's prestige, and finally, as one of our major generals afterward wittily remarked, to the surrender of Santiago, "when Toral's sand gave out."

While this sequence of events made it evident in due time that my reënforcements would not be required, there can be but little doubt that the credit of the demand for surrender was due mostly to Colonel McClernand rather than to General Shafter, who discouraged it at first and yielded only on the urgent representation that it could do no harm but might do much good. As it frequently turns out in military life, the demand was a fortunate one, for it found the Spanish commander worse demoralized by his own situation and by the destruction of the Spanish fleet than Shafter was by the difficulties which confronted him and his army.

Without dwelling further on the Santiago campaign and its fortunate termination, I may say that in pursuance of the first orders received, my Division was transported rapidly by regiment and brigade through Chattanooga and Atlanta to Charleston, but as it found no transports on its arrival at the seaport, it was obliged to go into camp, where it remained for two weeks. While waiting, regular instruction, drills, and reviews were resumed, and

everything practicable was done to interest, if not to please, the people of the city. Rigid discipline was maintained, due respect was shown to the local authorities, open-air concerts were given by the bands, the national colors were displayed on every occasion and every respect, including standing at attention with bared heads, was shown by the officers present when the "Star Spangled Banner" was played. But the people were slow to respond. They had been rebels in the days of the Civil War, and seemed to be disposed to look upon both officers and men not only as Northerners but as hirelings of a hated Government. All the white people, including the ladies, held themselves aloof till the federal judge, a gallant one-armed ex-Confederate, and a leading newspaper, recognized and extended to us the right hand of fellowship. Fortunately, a few of our officers were acquainted with some of the leading ladies, upon whom they called, and to whom later they introduced their friends. By a few well-directed civilities the ice was broken and in a short time the principal houses were open and extending their hospitality to our officers. Finding that there was not a single man in the command except myself and General Ernst who had ever borne arms against the South, the frigid atmosphere warmed and friendly relations were soon established. Balls were given by us as well as by the citizens, which were followed by breakfasts, teas, and dinners exactly as though no estrangement had ever existed. It was an interesting coincidence that I had been present with our army on James Island just across the bay, and had participated in the battle of Secessionville, fought within sight of Battery Point,

the chief promenade of the town, during the first year of the Civil War. As far as I know this was not laid up against me, for I was treated by every one as an honored guest, if not as a cherished personal friend. The two weeks of our occupation of Charleston were really the only period in the history of the town when a United States force strong enough to hold it, was concentrated within its borders. It was a pleasant episode and one which, no doubt, did much to break down prejudice and reëstablish friendly relations between that city and the rest of the United States. I have always regarded my stay at that place as one of my happiest experiences, and the friendships contracted there amongst the pleasantest and most durable of my life.

There was only one episode connected with the matter of transportation and its supply worthy of record. Immediately after arriving at Charleston and finding that no ships were in port to convey us to our destination, Judge Brawley, of the United States admiralty court, told me that the tramp steamer *Rita,* trying to run the Cuban blockade, had been captured, brought in, and condemned as a prize, and with proper authority and security he would turn her over to me. I at once had her inspected by Colonel Biddle, chief engineer, and Major Woodbury, chief surgeon, and on their report that she was sound and seaworthy and could be furnished, coaled, and got ready to sail with a regiment of soldiers within forty-eight hours, I asked and obtained orders from the War Department to use her as a troop ship. Although she was almost immediately taken out of my control for twenty-four hours by the general-in-chief, who was also under orders for Cuba

or Porto Rico, my officers actually outfitted and dispatched her with eight full companies of another command for Santiago within two days. It is pleasant to add that she reached her destination in safety after rather a long voyage of six days. The readiness with which this steamer was dispatched grew out of my experience at Port Royal farther down the South Carolina coast the first year of the Civil War, and its success was not only gratifying to me but was most creditable to the officers who prepared and dispatched her for sea with such unusual expedition. In connection with our delay the incident served besides to emphasize the fact that a nation should not engage in a war beyond sea without an ample fleet of suitable transports and a body of trained officers to outfit, supply, load, and dispatch them in an orderly and systematic manner. It is not a simple branch of military service in which the inexperienced volunteer is likely to excel.

Another incident of less importance but far more amusing took place a few days later. After the good people of Charleston had got used to our presence and began to entertain us, my staff arranged for a return ball. I was holding a conference on the front piazza of the hotel with General Ernst, a most dignified and serious officer, commanding my first brigade. It was after dark and the hotel was filled with wives and daughters who had come to bid us good-by and to see us embark. Rumors had already begun to circulate that our destination would be changed and that we should be sent on some perilous expedition against the public enemy. Everybody was eager to know what was going on, and everybody kept us under close and anxious surveillance. It was now

the middle of July, and in that latitude it was naturally hot and sultry. It was before the days of khaki, and both officers and soldiers were badly clad for the weather and still worse for the season in the tropics. Under these conditions Ernst and I were seated apart in the coolest spot we could find. We were supposed to be engaged in a "council of war," and were unconscious that we were under observation. The ladies thought surely that orders had come at last, that there would soon be bleeding hearts and parting in hot haste, and that all the distressing details would probably be arranged and made known by morning. The anxiety and suspense were at the highest when I broke the spell by bringing my hand down with a sharp slap, saying aloud: "Well, Ernst, that settles it! You can wear regulation uniform if you like, but I am going to wear white to the ball to-morrow night."

The glad news spread rapidly, and the anxious crowd on the piazza soon thinned out, but I did not know, till a bright girl told me the next day, how great the anxiety or how perfect the relief had been. And it is frequently this way in war time. Neither the gravest men nor those charged with the heaviest responsibility are always pursing their brows or turning over in their minds the weighty affairs of a coming campaign.

While we were waiting for transports, and would have continued to wait impatiently, however grave the emergency, our destination was changed from Santiago, the early surrender of which had now become certain, to Porto Rico, the next most populous and most important Spanish island east of Cuba.

# XIV

## OCCUPATION OF PORTO RICO

Sail for Island—Land at Ponce—Miles in chief command —Advance to Juana Diaz—Capture of Coamo and its garrison—Rumors of peace—Armistice—End of the War—Civil Administration—Address planters at El Paraiso—Relieved from duty—Return to the States.

General Toral and the Spanish forces defending Santiago surrendered July 14, 1898, but the Peace of Paris, which ended the war and defined the relations of the parties thereto, was not concluded till several months later. Meanwhile, hostilities continued in a somewhat languid way. Spain was supposed to have other cruisers besides those destroyed or captured at Manila and Santiago, and there was still some ground for the fear that they would keep the sea, especially against our commerce, and might even make a descent on exposed points of our long and undefended seacoast. In face of this possibility we sailed from Charleston at 7 P. M. on July 20, 1898, with Ernst's brigade, First Division, First Army Corps, embarked on the transports *Obdam, La Grande Duchesse,* and the *Mobile,* for Porto Rico, but entirely without naval escort or protection of any kind. Fortunately, the weather was fine and the sea smooth, so that we arrived at our destination off

the east end of the island abreast of Fajardo on the morning of the 26th. One of our ships had met with an accident to its condensers, and one was slower than represented, but the whole fleet was well in hand when we met the United States cruiser *Columbia,* just east of the island with an order from General Miles to join him without delay at Guanica, a small landlocked harbor near the southwestern end of the island. A beautiful sail in sight of land all day brought us to our anchorage shortly after dark. Early the next morning we entered the harbor and reported to General Miles, whom we found there with one brigade, but the little bay was utterly out of the way and the roads entirely inadequate for effective operations in any direction. Accordingly, Miles changed his plans and decided to disembark sixteen miles farther east at Ponce, the second city of the island, connected with San Juan on the north coast by a broad macadamized highway, said to be at that time the best road in the West Indies.

The harbor of Guanica which we had entered head on, although sufficiently deep, was almost landlocked and so crowded with transports that our steamer could not turn about in it. This made it necessary for us to back out for over a mile through a narrow crooked channel, but the maneuver, although hitherto unheard of for a long, ocean-going steamer, was successfully managed by the captain, who was a bold and skillful navigator. Had the weather been rough this fortunate result could not have been attained, and our withdrawal as well as our further movements would have been correspondingly delayed. But fortune favored us. We found that Ponce had been abandoned early that morning

and was already occupied by a small detachment of marines from our blockading ships. My whole command was at hand, but as the beach, or *playa,* two miles in front of the city, was shallow and shelving for a half mile out, and my requisitions for flats and motor boats had not been filled, the landing of our animals and supplies was a long and tedious operation. Had our movement into the interior depended upon a prompt advance after our first appearance, it would have been seriously endangered by the failure of the War Department to fill my requisitions, and by its generally inadequate preparation to meet perfectly well-known conditions. With our transports anchored more than a half mile from the shore, with no wharf or landing facilities, it would have been impossible to disembark the transportation and supplies of the command without the assistance rendered by the navy, and especially by Captain Higginson, of the battleship *Massachusetts.* The troops got ashore that day, but with all we could do our impedimenta were seriously delayed and our preparations to advance were not complete for fully a week longer than would otherwise have been necessary.

As the enemy had withdrawn toward the interior and made no sort of effort to resist or embarrass us, I had ample time in which to restore order, establish a military administration and reconnoiter the country along the great highway toward Coamo. Notwithstanding the improvements in infantry firearms, my command had been supplied with Springfield rifles and cartridges of black powder on the theory of the Ordnance Department that these would be good enough for fighting the Spaniards, but under

my earnest protest the new standard rifle, of which a supply was on hand in the States, was furnished and issued to the command on the third day of August on foreign soil only four days before we began our forward movement. With any men less intelligent than the American soldier this might have been a costly if not a fatal change, but the volunteers readily adapted themselves to the new rifle and used it in their first and only action with great effect.

The authorities and people of Ponce received us with an enthusiastic welcome. They were heartily tired of Spanish domination and quite ready to give us every help in their power. Under the guidance of young and patriotic citizens my engineers soon had a perfect understanding of the surrounding country to the vicinity of the stronghold at Aibonito, thirty miles from Ponce on the military road near the summit of the main divide between the north and south sides of the island. It is a bold and rapidly rising region broken by brooks and rivers which are insignificant in the dry season but become raging torrents, many of them deep enough to float a first-class battleship, in the rainy season.

The enemy had abandoned all the near-by country and posted his advanced detachment at Coamo, a small and beautiful town in the coffee region some twenty miles inland on the main road near the junction of the Coamo and Cuyon Rivers. It is a commanding site of great natural strength where one determined soldier might well defy a hundred. But, fortunately, the broken country about it was heavily timbered and the position was found to be easily approached and turned.

Miles, the general-in-chief, joined me ashore

shortly after I had landed and, escorted by the firemen of the city with a military band playing one of Sousa's marches, we drove to the City Hall, where we held a reception and received the heartiest assurance of welcome. At the conclusion of that ceremony, Miles appointed me military governor of the city and district and then returned on board to look after the scattered force of twelve or fourteen thousand men which constituted his invading army. He had landed two brigades at Guanica, sending one around the island to the left toward Mayaguez, one to join me at Ponce, and two further to the east under the immediate command of General Brooke, while my column of only one brigade of infantry with two regular batteries and a troop of New York cavalry had the main and only practicable road to the capital of the island, which would naturally become our main objective as well as the enemy's final stronghold. It requires no knowledge of strategy to show the reader that this disposition of the invading force, while well calculated to confuse the Spaniards, made it almost impossible to synchronize and coördinate our own movements. My advance was pushed out to Juana Diaz, ten miles from Ponce, soon after landing, but my main column did not begin its advance till August 8. Miles followed me to the front and, after approving my plan to turn Coamo with a strong regiment and if possible shut up and capture its garrison, he left me to look after his other columns, remarking as he took his leave that he wished he could depend upon me "not to go too fast." Regarding this as a mild though somewhat complimentary criticism, I replied at once: "You are commanding general in the island, and if

you are not willing to trust my discretion, you have only to give your specific orders and they will be literally obeyed." To this he gave a reassuring reply, and then rode back to Ponce.

Accordingly, with a thorough understanding of the country and the problem before us, I moved forward from Juana Diaz to within three miles of Coamo. I sent Colonel Hulings with the Sixteenth Pennsylvania Volunteers under the guidance of Colonel Biddle by a night march through the cross trails and valleys and over the divide into position behind the enemy, while Ernst with the rest of his brigade supported by the batteries with his right covered by Clayton's troop of New York cavalry, guided by Major Flagler, advanced by the right of the highway directly against the town. These movements were so timed as to bring the main force against the left and front of the Spaniards shortly after daylight, but also after the turning column had reached its designated position in rear. Although the indistinct trails and the shades of night made the movement through the tropical forest somewhat slower than it should have been, the combination was entirely successful and by eight o'clock in the morning the narrow valley both above and below the town, and the surrounding heights, were reverberating with the field artillery and the tearing rattle of our Krag-Jorgensens. An outlying blockhouse on the road to Los Baños held by the enemy's pickets, was set afire by our shells and the whole beautiful landscape was soon covered by the smoke and made horrid by the noise and confusion of battle. But our plans were well laid and although not a man of the command except Lancaster, the chief

of artillery, Ernst, and myself had ever seen a gun fired in anger or a man killed in war, every officer and soldier did his duty according to the part assigned him, as fully and satisfactorily as if he had been a seasoned veteran of many campaigns.

The Spaniards made a bold stand, and from their serried and well-formed ranks, poured volley after volley upon our converging columns, and especially upon Hulings and his Pennsylvanians in the rear. But they were evidently taken by surprise, though not in their beds. Our soldiers were closing in upon them from all sides as well as from the rear, and there was nothing left for them but to fly or to lay down their arms and surrender. They did both. The teamsters, clerks, and invalids to the number of seventy or eighty starting at the first alarm by the highway to the interior got off in the confusion, but the bulk of the fighting force—five officers and one hundred and sixty-two men—were made prisoners. The gallant Spanish colonel and four men were killed, while between thirty and forty were wounded. The Spanish firing was unusually wild, for not one of our men was killed and only six wounded.

The cavalry which struck the highway east of the town, pushed promptly along the great road to prevent the enemy from blowing up the bridges and culverts, while the infantry and artillery followed closely in support. One single-span bridge across the Coamo had been destroyed before we reached the town, but the pursuit was so prompt and rapid that all beyond it were saved, although the enemy had exploded a mine, blowing a hole in the arch of

one bridge, and with his ample preparations would have treated others in the same way, if his main force had not been captured.

That portion of the enemy which escaped lost no time in getting back to the stronghold of Aibonito, some five miles beyond Coamo, but this was a place near the top of the mountains, not only so strong of itself but so covered by fortifications and guns on the craglike and lofty ridges of El Peñon and Asomanti, that it was impossible to reach them by a front approach. The intervening country, although as beautiful as the Vale of Cashmir, was so broken and tumbled into ravines and impassable ridges that regular operations through it were impracticable. The only road that could be traveled through the region is the beautiful highway which, twisting through crooked valleys, doubling around sharp promontories, skirting the base of overhanging cliffs, and hugging the sides of the precipitous slopes, all the time rising rapidly to their summits, was swept at its most favorable reaches by the enfilading, plunging, and cross fire of the batteries above.

A personal reconnoissance with the aid of my enterprising engineer officers under the cover of the mountains to heights from which the whole scene could be taken in, convinced me that afternoon that the enemy's position on the summits beyond was impregnable by direct attack. Before nightfall it became apparent that our progress would have to be suspended till we could work out a route through the trails and ravines and up the mountain sides, by which we could repeat the operation at Coamo and again turn the enemy out of his commanding posi-

tion. Experience was our only safe guide and, fortunately, we had plenty of that.

Accordingly, the command was ordered into bivouac by the side of a mountain stream flowing with crystal water, amidst mountain air which was filled with balm and pleasant odors. We had been taught that great rainstorms and tropical cloudbursts followed by raging floods might drive us to the tops of the ridges, hence our camps were selected most carefully above the reach of overflow, and were soon ablaze with cheerful camp fires. Meanwhile, our engineers who had learned Spanish at West Point, guided by natives, were again working their way to the front, through defiles and rocky valleys, for the purpose of seeing how the heights above could be turned. Fortunately, by the second day they had found practicable routes around both of the enemy's flanks, which would surely enable me to place our column again across his line of retreat. Both routes were obscure and exceedingly precipitous, but as the shorter led to the left, it became our plan to make the new turning movement in that direction. As that movement would at first carry us far afield and up the craggy mountain sides, Ernst in person with the bulk of his brigade was told off to lead it through Baranquitas and Honduras, mere points on the map, to the rear of Aibonito.

Rumors of peace had already begun to reach us at the front, and to make sure that the enemy was still there, as well as to learn what I could of his temper and disposition, I sent Colonel Bliss, chief-of-staff, next day under a flag of truce to demand the surrender of the enemy in our front. While I had but little, if any, expectation that the Spanish

commander would yield to my cheeky demand, I had long years before learned that it was no mistake in war to ask for what you would like to have, even if you should be forced to accept only what you could get away with. While my flag was politely received and my demand sent to the commanding officer in rear for an answer, which would probably be forthcoming the next morning, Bliss returned to Coamo. The next day at sunrise he went for the promised answer, which was, of course, not only a negative, but accompanied by a strong intimation that no more flags would be received and that if we wished to avoid an effusion of blood we had better not advance against the position in our front.

As nothing further was to be gained by delay, I decided to begin the turning movement that night and push it to a conclusion. The distance to be covered, with all its turnings and difficulties, could not be less than ten miles, and, as much of it was to be straight up the mountain side, it might fairly be regarded as twice and possibly three times that distance on the level. Every possible arrangement was made to hold the road to the rear with artillery, cavalry, and a small detachment of infantry, while the main body was struggling up the mountain in search of victory, which would force the enemy to retreat and clear the road to San Juan. To make sure that no effort in that direction and that no accident to Ernst should cause confusion or uncertainty in the turning movement, I sent Colonel Biddle and Major Hoyle, both able and vigorous officers, to guide and, in case of need, to assist the commanding officer. With all these precautions the head of column had begun its march along the trail

toward Baranquitas, when a courier arrived at my headquarters with the news that an armistice had been concluded between the United States and Spain and that all military operations were to cease for the present, the opposing forces to hold their respective positions till further orders.

General Miles, still at Ponce, sent for me the next day and after showing some displeasure at my flag of truce he heartily thanked me and my command for the successes we had gained at such little expense, declaring that we could not have taken more trouble or done better work had we been confronting a hostile force of twenty-five thousand men. His praise was unstinted, and when it is remembered that the affair at Coamo was the most complete of any connected with the operation in Porto Rico, his gratification can be well understood.

But the war was over, and the conditions of peace were now to be determined by high commissioners who were to meet in Paris. The Porto Rico campaign had been made by experienced regular officers, with but few newspaper men at hand to spread exaggerated reports about it for the glorification of popular favorites. As far as Miles and his subordinates were concerned they had managed every detail methodically and efficiently. The country was naturally quite as difficult as Cuba and just as sickly, but it is proper to say that, with the exception of a typhoid infection brought from the States and slight digestive disturbances, due more to the native fruits than to climate, the troops were free from epidemics and any unusual sickness. The records showed but few deaths and at no time over twenty-three per cent. from all causes unfit for duty,

the larger part of which were light cases, mostly developed after the campaign had ended, and the friendly people, with pardonable anxiety to please our soldiers and satisfy their curiosity, had supplied them too freely with oranges, pineapples, and bananas and with the rarer and less wholesome varieties of tropical fruits. Withal, there was no lack of hospitals, medicines, Red Cross nurses, or supplies, and no cause for alarm at any time. Although our occupation continued for over two months, there was no round robin and no necessity for withdrawing the troops to Montauk Point. The simple fact is that the campaign and occupation of Porto Rico in July and August were managed so well that the officers and men, as well as the people of the island, regarded it as a continuous picnic or gala *fiesta*, while the campaign and capture of Santiago at practically the same time of year were characterized by sickness, disorder, and general mismanagement, which came uncomfortably near to national disaster and disgrace.

As military governor I took every precaution as long as I remained in the island to maintain order, to enforce discipline, and to reassure and protect the people, who received us everywhere with open arms as friends and liberators. While the great majority of the islanders were peacefully rejoicing that the Spanish dominion was at an end, a few pronounced revolutionists and patriots who had not taken up arms with the Cubans now showed a disposition to wreak vengeance on the Spanish sympathizers who were still in the island. In one case they burned a village, pillaged the shops, and committed other outrages, but, sending troops at once

to the spot, the ringleader was promptly arrested. As the insular judges holding under Spanish authority had abandoned their offices and fled, the enforcement of the local laws was necessarily suspended, and this made it necessary to hold all prisoners indefinitely or try them at once by military commission. Naturally, I chose the latter course for the great offense referred to above. I convened a commission of high officers in accordance with regulations and orders in force and designated Colonel Burpee, my staff judge advocate, to conduct the trial. This was done with promptitude, patience, deliberation, and with a due regard for all the prisoner's rights, as well as for such formalities as could in any way concern the prisoner or impress the public. The meetings were open and, of course, conducted with the utmost decorum. Interpreters were present and all questions and answers were duly translated into both Spanish and English where necessary. Fortunately, the facts were all easily ascertained and clearly proven, and after due deliberation the prisoner was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment in the Minnesota state prison for fifteen years.

The proceedings and findings were duly approved and forwarded to the War Department and the President, who also approved them and ordered the sentence to be carried into effect. This was done, and, as proper notice was given through the insular newspapers, the beneficial results were instantaneous.

A certain Señor Fajardo, one of the most prominent republicans of the island, shortly after our landing asked authority of General Miles to raise

a regiment of Porto Rican soldiers, but upon my advice the general denied or recalled the authority which the applicant claimed to have received from him and made certain that there should be no divided responsibility in the maintenance of order and no interference with the peaceful pursuits of the people. Several of our higher officers, notably General Henry, seemed to regard themselves as in authority over an alien, if not a conquered, people, and, therefore, charged with supervising and correcting their manners and customs. The custom of yoking cattle in Porto Rico is by binding a padded beam across their foreheads to the base of their horns with raw hide thongs or ropes. This method made such an appeal to Henry's pity that he was about to issue an order forbidding it and prescribing the American method instead. Fortunately, however, he consulted me about it and I forbade his making any order whatever on the subject, calling his attention to the fact that, while it was none of our business how the Porto Ricans yoked their cattle, they were but following the method that had come down to them from Bible days and had been used in nearly all countries except our own from the dawn of civilization to the present time. This view of the matter, my gallant friend frankly confessed, had not occurred to him, and without further reference to the relative merits of the two plans he gave up his idea and made no order on the subject.

But this was not the end of our work. The civil officers of all grades were slow to resume their functions. The mayors, or *alcaldes,* held over without question, but they were naturally more or less in doubt as to what would be expected of them by the

new régime. I therefore reassured them at the earliest hour by calling attention to the fact that the municipality is in all countries regarded as the political unit, and no matter what changes of government may take place above, whether through conquest or revolution, the mayor and council not only remain in office till removed by competent authority, but are held responsible for the maintenance of order, the protection of persons and property, and the continuance of municipal business exactly as though there had been no interruption or change in the regular course of affairs. With this assurance the police, the markets, and the railroads were set in motion without delay, but the custom house and postoffices were more complicated affairs. They belonged to the nation and were taken over by my appointees the first thing after our occupation, much to the gratification of both natives and invaders. The customs receipts the first day were over $7,500, and increased rapidly thereafter. The idea that we were among friends whom we must protect and not harass was quickly adopted by our soldiers. The best of feeling followed immediately. Our bands gave public concerts in the parks, and from the first every boy in Ponce was whistling "A Hot Time in the Old Town To-night," and regarding it as our national air. Within a week the islanders, as well as our own people, recognized that we stood for order, good behavior, and a peaceful resumption of business, while the powers above would settle the future status of the country in their own good time.

When this understanding had become established some of the leading citizens of the district invited me to meet them at the coffee plantation of El

Paraiso, some fifteen or twenty miles back of Ponce, ostensibly for breakfast, but really for an informal conference in regard to the future of the island.

This meeting took place on the last day of August, 1898. The weather was fine and the journey on horseback most delightful. The first five miles were over a splendid macadamized highway pointed toward Adjuntas on the north side of the island, but not yet finished. The rest was a zigzag climb up steep hills and through beautiful tropical forests which filled the soul with delight. The breakfast, or as we should call it, the luncheon, was at a Corsican planter's, Mr. Pierluisi's, modest but commodious country house. It consisted of native fruits and a number of tasty dishes, including "bacalao biscayino" and light Spanish wines, ending with the best coffee I ever tasted, made from caracolillia grown on the place. It was my first Spanish-American *fiesta* and left nothing to be desired. It will always be remembered as a most delightful experience, not only for the sympathetic hospitality extended to me, but for the opportunity it gave me of meeting the leading lawyer, merchants, and planters of the region, and of advising them as to their duties and prospects as affected by the expulsion of the Spaniards.

Addressing them as "gentlemen and fellow citizens," with the explanation that Porto Rico had become an American dependency, I pointed out that the great Republic, unlike European governments, has no subjects but extends its rights and privileges freely and equally to all men who reside within its far-reaching boundaries. I expressed the hope that the termination of Spanish rule and the establish-

ment of military government under the American flag would soon be followed by local self-government based on the essential principles of American liberty. I called attention to the fact that we did not pretend to interfere with the local laws except when necessary to protect our army and to maintain peace and good order, and that we looked to the local courts to do justice between man and man, and to the moderation and good sense of the people themselves for the continuance of that tranquillity which had so far characterized their conduct. I added in substance: If every one, high and low, rich and poor, *Puerto-Riqueño* and *Español*, devoted himself strictly and exclusively to his own private affairs or to official business, eschewing politics and public discussion, everybody would find in the end that the island had not only been well governed and prosperous, but worthy of the good fortune which had come to it. With proverb and precept I warned both *insulares* and *peninsulares* that they must regard the past as a sealed book which we would not permit either side to open, and that they must live together in peace and harmony. I then called attention to the fact that as soon as the Spanish left the island the President would probably appoint a military governor, the length and character of whose administration would depend largely upon their own behavior; that in the natural course of events it would be replaced by a territorial government, the powers of which would be prescribed by Congress, and would be followed in turn by an autonomous state, which would doubtless be finally admitted into the Union. How long they would be kept in probation was a matter of conjecture. With peace and

good order showing the people really worthy of self-government, the period would be merely nominal, but, if unfortunately they disregarded the rights of each other or showed by turbulence, intolerance, and ignorance that they were unfit for self-government, they could rest assured that that great privilege would be withheld indefinitely.

Finally, I pointed out that, as we have no state church, the Catholic church would no longer be supported by the public treasury, but must adopt the parochial system like the Protestant sects; that there must be perfect freedom and toleration for all; that no enlightened man in the United States ever asks another what his religion is; that all recognize perfect freedom of choice for everyone else; and that God, the Compassionate, is alone the judge. I then told the story of the Wisconsin boy who carried a saber for the Union till the end of the Rebellion, worked his way through college, became a missionary in the South, and founded "The Helping Hand," with the following impressive words as its motto:

"I shall pass through this world but once; therefore, whatever good thing I may do for any human creature, let me do it now; let me not postpone nor delay it, for I shall not come this way again."

Emphasizing this as the true philosophy of life in politics as well as in religion, I concluded with a word against the intolerance of one and the bigotry of the other and then warned them as solemnly as I could against the danger of insular turning against peninsular, of *Puerto-Riqueño* turning against *Español* with torch and dagger to avenge the wrongs and oppression of Spanish domination. It needed

no argument to show that an outbreak against this feeling could not fail to condemn their countrymen as a turbulent and law-breaking people, unfit for self-government, and therefore doomed to be ruled by the strong hand of a military governor. Feeling that they were, in fact, docile, orderly, kindly, and fully prepared already for a better government than they had ever enjoyed, I urged them to lose no opportunity to show the world that they were tolerant and magnanimous as well. In conclusion I called special attention to the fact that their wrongs, whatever they might have been, had already been amply avenged by the expulsion of the Spanish flag, without cost or effort on their part, and that the least they could do in return was to repress the spirit of revenge and resolve to live in peace, quietude, and forbearance with their Spanish neighbors. Thus and thus only could they show themselves to be worthy of the great destiny which had overtaken them, and which, it was to be hoped, would finally clothe their beautiful island with sovereignty and membership in the great continental republic, and make them our "fellow citizen" forever.

Fortunately, several of the gentlemen present understood English, and this, with an occasional pause for translation, gave the entire party ample time to gather my meaning. All seemed deeply impressed and gave the most flattering assurance of approval and support. The next day Matienzo Cintron, the most eminent lawyer in that part of the island, asked me to write out my remarks so that they might be translated at length, printed, and circulated in the insular newspapers. This I did at once and, judging from the favorable response which

came in from all quarters, my remarks were recognized by all as the right word at the right time. They found their way to the States shortly afterward and, much to my gratification, were widely republished and favorably commented upon.

In due time, with unanimous approval, I appointed Matienzo Cintron judge of the highest district court. Later Governor General Brooke not only confirmed him in office, but promoted him to the supreme court, with which he has been honorably connected for many years. Thus it is that timely forethought, forbearance, patience, and good judgment on the part of those in high authority are frequently far better than the strong hand in dealing with alien people and their affairs.

With the tranquillity which followed, my task as military governor was not only a light one, but came to a calm and peaceful end. Within two months from our landing I was relieved from duty in the island and ordered back to the States with the greater part of my command.

My connection with the expulsion of the Spanish flag from Porto Rico and with the establishment and maintenance of a just and orderly peace among the people has always given me unalloyed pleasure, not only because the exemplary conduct of the command, drawn as it was from widely separated states of the Union, reflected great credit on the American name, but because it won the warmest commendation of the Porto Rican people. The hearty and affectionate farewell they gave us made it certain that they regarded us as *"amigos muy simpaticos,"* and our country as *"la mas grande del mundo!"*

The only dissatisfaction I witnessed and did not

fully understand at the time was on the part of General Miles, who as commanding general of the invading army naturally expected to be at the head of the commission to arrange for the withdrawal of the Spanish forces and the occupation of the entire island by our own. He also signified his intention to put me in chief command, but the Government, for reasons of its own, had other plans. It appointed Brooke, Wade, and Gordon as commissioners, and afterward made Brooke governor general, while it ordered Miles home, and he in turn ordered me to take my troops to New York on their way to be mustered out. I had wished to march them by the Royal Road through the island to San Juan, but, seeing that this might delay us, and that he was to have nothing further to do with establishing the national authority in the island, he ordered me to take the first transports that could be had for New York, authorizing me to review the troops and lead them in triumph through the streets of the metropolis before sending them to their respective states. But this was countermanded from Washington on our arrival, and thus the only organization that came back from the war in better condition than when it entered it was disbanded and sent home without any public recognition or ceremony whatever. While no explanation of this unusual course was ever made, I have always supposed that it was due partly to politics and partly to the controversy which was soon on in full blast between Miles and the Administration in regard to the food supply of the army. But why it should have affected me, who had no part in either, I could never understand.

# XV

## OCCUPATION OF CUBA

Commanding First Army Corps at Lexington and Macon—Renew acquaintance with people at Macon—Review for President McKinley—Remarks on Continental Union—Negro regiments left behind—Transfer Corps to Matanzas—Recommended for chief command—Brooke as Governor General—Province and city of Matanzas fall to my lot—Conditions prevailing in the Island—Reception of Maximo Gomez—Brooke's administration.

The campaign of Porto Rico was a short one. Within thirty days from the time we sighted the island off Point Fajardo I was ordered back to the States with troops which had beaten the Spaniards in the field and were no longer needed for military operations. Shortly after reaching home and enjoying a few days' rest I was assigned to command the First Army Corps, vice Brooke, who on leaving for Porto Rico had been temporarily succeeded by Breckenridge. That part of the corps left at Chickamauga Park, naturally one of the wholesomest places in the country, had become so seriously infected with typhoid fever from the State encampments that it had been transferred to a new encampment near Lexington, Kentucky, where I rejoined it

on October 20. I found it comfortably and advantageously situated. Every known precaution had been taken to leave the infection behind. Its sanitary condition was greatly improved, but many generals, as well as staff and line officers, were absent on leave and much work was necessary to put it into proper condition for service in what was supposed to be the sickly climate of Cuba. There were still a few typhoid cases, and another change of encampment seemed to be necessary to get entirely rid of that disease. The fall season was well under way and cold weather coming on. Our next duty was known to be as a part of the army of occupation, which had been fixed at about fifty thousand men. In accordance with my own judgment, as well as that of the Washington authorities, I was ordered to transfer the corps by rail to southwestern Georgia, with my own headquarters at Macon. Of course, I was familiar with the entire region, for I had ended the War for the Union in it a third of a century before. The climate at that season was delightful, the soil was porous and easily drained, and the officers by that time highly skilled in moving and making camps as well as in all sanitary measures necessary to keep them clean and healthy. With such division commanders as Bates, Sanger, and Ludlow, the corps was soon comfortably settled, this time in the most perfect surroundings. Every known precaution had been taken; all sick or ailing soldiers were left behind, disinfectants of every kind had been used in abundance, and before a fortnight elapsed it was certain that the entire command was not only free from infection of every sort, but in better condition than ever before. Methodical instruction and drills

were resumed, and it was but a few days till all branches of administration were brought to a high state of perfection.

In the desire to obtain troops that would be immune, several negro regiments had been lately organized in the South, and, although commanded by good officers, several of whom were regulars, one of the regiments reached camp in a somewhat lawless condition. The first night it got liquor and was soon reported drunk and disorderly. A few men left camp with their guns and on some trivial pretext began shooting up the neighborhood. When this was reported I ordered the division commander with white troops to surround the camp, to parade the regiment, call the rolls, report the absentees, stack arms, take away the colors, arrest and confine the disorderly, and then send the men to quarters with notice that none could leave camp or have their arms again till their commander could assure me that they knew how to behave themselves as soldiers.

The lesson was silently but promptly administered, though it was not till the climax that its full import was understood. By daylight the absentees had been gathered in and confined, and the entire command taught a lesson of discipline and obedience that it never forgot. A system of squad drills and camp instruction was rigidly enforced, and within a week the arms were restored and the negro brigade was one of the most quiet and well behaved in the corps. And yet the episode taught me a lesson also. Realizing that the Cubans were a civilized people who had rightly rebelled against foreign oppression and were entitled to be regarded as friendly allies, instead of alien enemies, I at once recom-

mended the discharge of all negro volunteers from the First Army Corps. I represented them as in no way fit exemplars of the American army in the work of restoring order, pacifying the island and preparing it for self-government. Fortunately, my views were accepted by the President, and all the colored troops were discharged before the corps was transferred to Cuba. The result was most satisfactory in every respect, for it left none but white Americans of the best type to carry on the work which fell to their lot under the joint resolution of Congress and the Treaty of Paris. Of course, there were occasional acts of bad behavior and even of violence on the part of a few drunken soldiers, but on the whole no country ever sent out an army corps which better represented its civilization or better understood the mission upon which it was about to embark. Here and there an officer, not always of inferior rank, forgot or failed to comprehend the simple work of pacification and took up that of political reconstruction and administration exactly as though they were conquerors who had come to occupy the land indefinitely. How far that was due to misconception or to unofficial intimations from those in higher authority will probably remain always a matter of conjecture, but I shall have more to say on that subject as it develops during my stay in the island.

Meanwhile, the First Corps remained in its Georgia encampment for about two months, during which it did much good work outside of the strictly military line. As I had made many acquaintances throughout the State, and especially at Macon, during the six months after the close of the Civil War,

the leading people received my family, my higher officers, myself, and my staff with every social attention. Most of the older citizens had "gone over to the majority," but here and there was one who had not only survived, but forgotten the days of humiliation and defeat and welcomed me and my command with pleasant memories and assurances of high respect. Among these were Senator Bacon, Major Hanson, the Nesbits, the Johnstons, and the family of Howell Cobb, but there were also many others who had heard their parents and friends speak kindly of my stay among them in former days, so that all extended the hand of good fellowship and did what they could to show that they regarded us not only as fellow citizens, but as the soldiers and representatives of a common and reunited country. It was to Senator Bacon that I was indebted for my prompt confirmation as a major general the year before.

It seems that the Senate in executive session was about to vote on my nomination, when the Senator asked for delay, speaking substantially as follows:

"The fortunes of war made me a prisoner to General Wilson at the close of the late unpleasantness, and I was under parole to report daily at his headquarters. Having done this several times, I grew restive, and called one morning to see General Wilson, whom I found a younger man than myself. After giving him my name as a staff officer of General Cobb, I told him that the war was over, and I wanted to give my general parole, and see if I could not make a living for myself and family. I had but little money; my negroes were free, but I had plenty of land, and wanted to cultivate it.

"At this juncture, Senator Hawley, Chairman of the Military Committee, fearing that I was going to make trouble, came over and asked me what was the matter with General Wilson. Waving him aside, I said: 'Wait a minute,' and then proceeded as follows: . . . After hearing me through, rising from his seat, Wilson placed his hand on my shoulder and said: 'Of course, you can have your general parole. The flag flying over us is your flag as much as it is mine, and this is your country to assist in restoring to prosperity; and by the way, Captain, perhaps you could use a few horses and mules in your farming operations. If so, I shall have pleasure in directing my quartermaster to give you a supply.'

"Of course I was surprised at this unexpected generosity from a Federal commander, and as a token of my appreciation, even at this late day, I want to move General Wilson's unanimous confirmation without further ceremony." I need not add that it has always been a most gratifying circumstance that the motion was carried immediately.

At Macon every one now appeared to be willing to forget and to forgive the past and to recall only the acts of good temper and good feeling which were ascribed to me in days long gone by. I had my headquarters in the identical rooms of the Lanier House that I had occupied in the summer of 1865. There was but little change in the hotel, but the city was two or three times larger. Business was brisk, the country was flourishing, and the people were happy and contented. We received and gave breakfasts, teas, dinners, and balls. The bands played, the flags were unfurled, and reviews were held. The President, the Secretary of War, mem-

bers of Congress, and many distinguished men from all parts of the country visited us. Banquets were given, patriotic speeches were delivered, and a sincere and successful effort was made "to bridge the bloody chasm" between the North and the South. In all that took place I was necessarily the central figure till the President arrived on the scene, but I minimized my speeches or reserved them for the promotion of friendly relations between the troops and the people by whom they were surrounded.

I had known and held friendly, if not intimate, relations with Major McKinley ever since he had entered Congress. We had always talked freely in regard to public matters at the national conventions and at other meetings. I had visited him while he was Governor of Ohio, had assisted in electing him as President, and had conferred with him at his home at Canton after his election, as well as at the White House after his inauguration, and, while I never regarded him as the greatest and most virile statesman our country produced, I did regard him as an amiable and able man of irreproachable habits and character, as well as a very astute politician. He knew very well the views I held in regard to "continental union," and especially in favor of an equal and honorable union of the Dominion of Canada with the United States whenever it could be arranged. We had discussed those questions in all their bearings at Canton only eighteen months before. He had assured me of his hearty concurrence in my views and especially in the suggestion that the Republicans should favor such trade and economic relations with the Dominion as would result sooner or later in bringing about a commercial, *if*

not a political, union between the two countries. That this was no casual or evanescent thought is shown by the fact that for eight years "continental union" was a cardinal principle which had gone into the Republican platform through the consent, if not the efforts, of himself and his Ohio supporters and as a direct result of my report on that subject from a sub-committee of which I was chairman.

But this is not all. In the last discussion, when the Cuban Rebellion and the Spanish War were far from occupying the center of the stage either at home or abroad, we went over the entire subject again, and in parting he assured me that he looked upon political union with Canada as a measure to be kept constantly in mind, and that if it should be his good fortune to carry it through he should regard it as "the crowning glory" of his administration.

With these statesmanlike sentiments in mind, I was unexpectedly called upon as the next speaker after the President at Macon. The troops had gone by when shouts from the people brought the President to the front with a few remarks in which he glorified the power and prestige of the country as manifested in the war with Spain. Although it cannot be said that he used the words, "world power," the germ of the idea was evidently in his remarks as well as in his mind. The response was enthusiastic. Under that inspiration, although I spoke with reluctance, I not only approved and emphasized all the President had said, but added in substance that, as the United States was the largest area in the world ever devoted to free government and free trade, I hoped the day would come when our flag

would fly supreme from the Arctic Ocean to the Isthmus of Panama, over an entire continent, not only free from European dominion, but dedicated eternally to the cause of peace. The response was still more enthusiastic, and after the pause which followed I declared that the realization of that hope, which might be delayed, but could not be defeated, would be "the crowning glory" of the administration whose good fortune it should be to bring it about.

There was not a word said about war, conquest, or forcible annexation, yet the outburst of cheers was loud and prolonged, and the President's approval seemed to be hearty and enthusiastic. But the whole proceedings were unpremeditated and spontaneous. I had not thought of speaking, much less of writing out, my remarks. The reporters were, therefore, taken by surprise, not only by the turn of our remarks, but by the fact that we spoke at all. They naturally got a poor report of what was actually said, but condensed my part therein into a spread-eagle intimation to all the world, and especially to Great Britain, that she must not only withdraw from the Western Hemisphere, but leave it to the exclusive control of the American people. While the President knew as fully what was in my mind as in his own, he was naturally a timid man who had already become alarmed by the manifest disposition of the European nations to minimize the advantages which we might claim from the Spanish War. It will be recalled that the British Government had sympathized with us rather than with Spain. It is possible that her leading statesmen and journalists, considering our success and oppor-

tunities, may have reached the conclusion that as her flag was the only European flag still flying over any part of North America, it would be the next to go, and that it would be good policy on her part to turn over a new leaf, and, instead of taking sides against us as she had always done in the past, to cultivate a better understanding and closer relations with the great Republic hereafter.

Be this as it may, "continental union" disappeared from the platform of the Republican party, nobody has ever told exactly when or exactly how, and from that day forth much more has been said about the natural bonds of interest and affection between the United States and Great Britain than in the entire century prior thereto. Whatever the motive, it is certain that McKinley was the first to weaken on this time-honored policy, the realization of which he had not long ago frankly said he should regard as the crowning glory of his administration.

Whatever may be the secret history of this apparent change of policy, there can be but little doubt that the recent defeat of reciprocity in certain natural and manufactured products by popular vote in Canada was a disappointment to President Taft and his supporters. It was a deliberate rejection by friends of the British connection and the enemies of the great Republic of closer trade relations with the American people, but it is to be hoped that Congress will put all such articles produced in Canada as are desirable and useful in the States on the free list and keep them there without reference to the course pursued by the Dominion. In the end that policy cannot but be favorable to American consumers, and to the solidarity of the English-speak-

ing people in the Western Hemisphere. What Goldwin Smith termed the "greater forces" appear to be working to that end with Canada as with Cuba, as silently, reasonably, and inevitably as they did two centuries ago for the union of England and Scotland.

The practical matters to dispose of when Mr. McKinley visited Macon were the occupation of Cuba, the disposition of the forces, the designation of the officers for the chief and department commands, and the settlement of the policy to be carried out in the island. Miles had become embroiled with the War Department in regard to details of army administration, besides his proper place as general-in-chief was Washington. Brooke had been left in Porto Rico, but was supposed to be somewhat dissatisfied with the small number of troops left under his command. Wood had succeeded Lawton at Santiago under circumstances reflecting on Lawton, and this left Wade, Lee, and myself as the seniors from whom a commander would naturally be selected. Wade was from a distinguished and influential Ohio family, and it soon became known that for this reason, if for nothing better, he was strongly favored by the President. His age, services, and character were all most creditable and his name was advocated by many influential men. Lee had been governor of Virginia, and was, besides, an officer of merit and deserved popularity. The strongest argument against him was that he had been in the Confederate army and was a Democrat. But I was not without highly influential friends. Although I had never been a civil office-holder, I knew many governors, senators, representatives, leading

journalists, and ex-army officers, and for a third of a century had been active in various parts of the country as a railroad manager and man of affairs, who had always done his full duty as a loyal citizen. Senators Frye, Allison, Platt of Connecticut, Foraker, Aldrich, Cullom, Fairbanks, Lodge, Bacon, and Cushman K. Davis, all intimate friends of mine, had early reached the conclusion, without the slightest solicitation on my part, that I was the best qualified and most available major general either in the regular or volunteer army for the principal command in the field and afterward for governor general of Cuba. The regular army officers, especially those of high rank, were largely in my favor, and so far as they dared, were the earnest advocates of my appointment. Generals Howard, Schofield, McCook, and Dodge, all of whom I had known for many years, recommended me on their own motion for the chief command in the Spanish War. Besides this, General Dodge went out of his way, after having spent some time with me at Lexington as chairman of a commission which was making certain investigations, and strongly advised the President to give me the appointment.

But this was not all. Secretary Alger, of whom I was no admirer and with whom I had but a slight acquaintance, sent out a confidential officer of rank, a stranger to me, to make a careful and exhaustive examination into my personal and official fitness for high command, and on the receipt of a favorable report proceeded at once to strongly urge the President not only to put me in chief command of the army of occupation, but to give me the much higher and more important appoint-

ment of governor general. The *New York Sun*, the *Evening Post*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Cincinnati Commercial*, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, and many other leading journals east and west, from the first, repeatedly and in no uncertain terms expressed themselves in favor of my appointment. This commendation was all unsought and still more gratifying on that account. The work would have been entirely congenial and I felt confident of my ability to carry it through in such a manner as could not fail to promote the welfare of both Cuba and the United States. But, withal, the President was evidently unfavorable to me, while his outgivings, noncommittal as they were, strongly indicated the appointment of Wade till the very day on which Brooke turned up in Washington about the middle of December. There had been little or no mention of him till his detail was actually given out on December 13, 1898, as commander of the newly established Military Division of Cuba and as military governor of the island. What the arguments or influences were in his behalf I never knew, but I always supposed they were that he was a regular officer of unbroken service and high character and, as next in rank to Miles, entitled to precedence. As he was my senior both as a regular and volunteer, I gave him my most loyal and unqualified support. I did not doubt then, nor have I ever doubted since, that with proper instructions he would have faithfully and successfully carried out the policy of the Administration.

The island, something over seven hundred miles in length and an average of over sixty miles in

width, with an area of something like forty-four thousand square miles, was at first sub-divided by province into six military departments, and, while it afterward came to my knowledge that Brooke wished me to command at Havana, he was not allowed to have control even in that matter. The President made the assignment himself of Brooke, Lee, and Ludlow, and under this assignment the province of Havana fell to Lee, while Ludlow, one of my division commanders, got the city of Havana. As he was a regular of the Engineer Corps, it was doubtless thought that he was peculiarly fitted for the work of sanitation and repair. The province and city of Matanzas fell to my lot, under an assignment of the War Department. Bates, another of my division commanders, got the province of Santa Clara and the city of Cienfuegos, but remained in command for a short time only, after which it was added to my command in April of that year, and the number of military departments in the island was reduced to three.

It was originally intended that the First Army Corps should reach the island in December, but lack of transports made it impossible to carry that intention into effect till early in January, 1899. While the movement was in progress the corps organization was dissolved and the troops assigned to territorial departments as above indicated. I reached Matanzas with Sanger's fine division, every man of which was in perfect health, two days before the last Spanish troops embarked for home. Without recognizing the insurgents or having anything to do with the insurgent leaders, the Spaniards had maintained order and drawn in their detachments

as rapidly as transports could be furnished to take them out of the country. They occupied that part of the city and shore east of the bay, while the advanced troops of my command, a battalion of the Third U. S. Volunteer Engineers, under the supervision of Colonel Biddle of my staff, took possession of Fort San Severino and that part of the city and suburbs west of the bay. No prescribed ceremonies or courtesies took place between the Spanish and American forces. Our communications were of the most formal character and there was no sign of the departing sovereignty of Spain or the oncoming possession of the United States, except that at noon, when, with appropriate salutes, the Spanish colors were lowered and the Stars and Stripes hoisted to the head of the flag staff in San Severino. That night the last transport disappeared, and for the first time General Bétancourt and his native troops made their appearance, but not till after I sent a courier to the country to find the General and his escort and bring them into the city for a patriotic *fiesta*. General Bétancourt and I met on the balcony of the City Hall, overlooking the public square, which was crowded with patriotic soldiers and citizens. We embraced in the sight of the multitude amid the plaudits of the Cuban citizens and soldiers and under the inspiring strains of martial music. It was a gala night characterized by a noble outburst of enthusiasm and marred by no single act of violence or misbehavior. The only condition put upon the patriotic forces was that they should enter the town absolutely without ammunition and that no act of resentment or contumely should be manifested toward the Spaniards who remained be-

hind as loyal subjects of the Spanish Government. It was the beginning of a friendship between General Bétancourt and myself, as well as between my troops and the insurgent forces of the Cuban Republic, which, I am sure, will last as long as life is spared to any of us.

Brooke, under the President's assignment, which was absolutely silent as to his functions except in so far as they were implied by the words "who in addition to the command of the troops in the Division, will exercise the authority of military governor of the island," issued his first order from Havana on December 27, 1898. Neither instructions nor order contained the slightest allusion to the course to be pursued toward Cuba, the Cuban people, or the various governments left behind by the Spanish authorities. It will be remembered that the latter, before retiring, had authorized what was known at the time as an autonomistic government for the island and its various provinces. It had appointed and installed a governor for each province, and had designated or acknowledged an *alcalde* and council for each important town and city. As far as I knew then or afterward, these officials were insulars of good character, conservative views, and fair education. In my province they gave ready and cheerful support to the military government without putting themselves forward, claiming precedence, or pressing their views upon my attention.

But there was in addition a more or less independent republican government and national assembly which represented the cause of *"Cuba Libre y Independiente."* This government was strictly native. It stood for the successful revolution, and,

while it had no fixed habitation or national capital, and could hardly claim that it had been chosen by the people at a regular election, there can be no doubt that it had a written constitution under which it controlled the rebellion against the mother country, conducted all its negotiations, and managed all its military, financial, and political business at home and abroad. True, Maximo Gomez had in the protracted, and at times almost hopeless, course of the war been clad with the powers of a dictator, and, while he had shown a disposition to be somewhat arbitrary with his own people in the field, he proved himself in the end to be the loyal and obedient servant of the Cuban assembly. He did not resign his commission and lay down his sword with as much ceremony as our own Washington, for, instead of being the greatest landowner and richest man of Cuba, he was but a poor adventurer and patriot of the same race from another island; but when formally notified by the assembly a few months later that the war was over, the island independent, and its army disbanded, he promptly handed in his resignation without a word of protest and with as much modesty as if he had been Cincinnatus himself.

Under these circumstances, all of which were creditable to the Cuban people and their leaders, it must be regarded as strange that in converting the island into a military division and sending an army of fifty thousand men to occupy it after the treaty of peace, which they did without the slightest authority from Congress, neither our civil nor military authorities uttered a single word nor promulgated a single order defining our policy, declaring

our intentions, or telling the Cuban people what was expected of them during the intervention. In view of the specific declaration of the Joint Resolution which had been widely published throughout the world, that the United States would exercise neither sovereignty, jurisdiction, nor control in the island of Cuba, except for the pacification thereof, and that it was its determination and purpose when that was accomplished to withdraw all armed forces and leave the island and its government to its people, it may be contended that no further notice of any kind was necessary. But the formal occupation of the island after the peace was a most important event in the eyes of the world, and a full statement of its purpose, as well as of the duties of the army and what was expected of the Cuban people, would have been received by all concerned with the highest satisfaction. It would have been a guide to the military governor, the department commanders, and the civil officers of every grade, as well as to the people themselves. That they expected something of the kind is certain. The Cuban army modestly asked permission to take part in the ceremonies which terminated the Spanish sovereignty, but this was denied, as afterward reported, till "the excitement had cooled off" and the "passions of the people could be controlled." The motive as described was, of course, a good one, but the apprehension of danger to life and property, with fifty thousand American troops to maintain peace and order among the people, who had as yet shown no sign of violence or outbreak, was without sufficient justification.

Brooke's denial had, however, aroused a feeling

of apprehension which was but partly quieted by his formal order of January 1, 1899, announcing himself as the representative of the President in the humane purpose of putting an end to the distressing conditions in the island, and announcing that this was to be done by a military government. While he declared that the object of this government was to give protection to the people, security to persons and property, and to restore confidence, encourage the resumption of the pursuits of peace, build up waste plantations, restore commercial traffic, and to afford full protection to all civil and religious rights, he also declared that this was to be done through the channels of civil administration under the civil and criminal code previously enforced and invited the Cuban people to coöperate in these objects. With the final statement that this course would "insure kind and beneficent government," it was absolutely silent as to what, if any, political action the people themselves should take. It ignored both the autonomistic government authorized by Spain and the Republican government established by the revolution, while it quietly assumed for the American commander all the arbitrary powers of a Spanish captain general. There was not a word recognizing the Cuban Republic, nor the sovereignty of the Cuban people. With all that was said and done, much of which was admirable, there was not a word acknowledging the obligations placed upon the President and his Government by the Teller Amendment as set forth in the fourth article of the Joint Resolution, not even a suggestion looking to the limitation of the government of intervention, nor to the establishment of a government by

the Cuban people. It could not have been more indefinite and non-committal had it been the open purpose of the United States to continue in possession of the island and ultimately to annex it in spite of the plain obligation placed upon it by Congress in the declaration of war. In view of all the circumstances, no one can successfully contend that the phraseology of the orders was a mere matter of chance, or that by its omissions, at least, it was not well calculated to alarm such of the Cuban people as favored the establishment of a free and independent republic.

On the day I arrived at Matanzas the division of the civil government into four departments was announced and the next day the Cuban secretaries were appointed. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the fact that they were all civilians. During the year which followed they devoted themselves to taking over and perfecting the administration of the several departments as established under the Spanish civil government, and, while this work was honestly and capably done, it naturally failed to allay the distrust of the people. They had neither part nor interest in it, but gave it quiet and unquestioning obedience for the simple reason that they could not help themselves. The government was in every respect a government of conquest and in no way the choice of the Cuban people. The most fortunate circumstance connected with it was that as long as Brooke and his department commanders were in control it was honestly and humanely administered. But it is worthy of note that when I asked Brooke, as I did frequently during that year, what our Government's policy and

ultimate purpose were in all that it was doing, in short, what was the state of the law under which we were acting, he frankly confessed that he did not know, "except by induction." He said his published orders contained all the information he had on that subject. He had no private instructions and had received no personal or official intimation from those in the confidence of the President or of his Administration. He regarded the pacification of the island and the reëstablishment of prosperity as comprising the whole duty with which he was charged.

And this would have been sufficient had the island been in a state of turbulence and violence, instead of being as quiet and peaceful as any state of the Union from the day of our arrival within its limits. Fortunately, the Cuban people and their leaders were well advised. They behaved with what must be regarded as unusual patience, moderation, and wisdom. Having on the first intimation discharged their commander-in-chief, disbanded their army, and dissolved their *Asambléa,* they waited with composure, though the air was filled with alarming rumors, till McKinley got time eighteen months later to formulate and adopt a policy which finally acknowledged their autonomy and gave them the right of independent self-government.

# XVI

## DEPARTMENT OF MATANZAS AND SANTA CLARA

Absence of national policy—State of the law in Cuba—Inspection of Provinces under my command—Population and distressing conditions—Recommend measures for their relief—Meeting of generals in Havana—Report on economic, industrial, and social conditions—Grafters and speculators at work—Wood, Governor General.

While there was no affirmative authority of law after the peace with Spain for the occupation of Cuba by an American army, and certainly no Congressional mandate requiring the President to appoint a governor general or to establish a republican or any other government in that island, the next two years and a half were full of interesting incidents. Goldwin Smith thought they marked the beginning of a fatal policy of expansion by the thoughtless absorption of a mongrel and mixed population alien to the American people, which would start us on the road of "Empire." The unexplained facts and the comments of both the home and foreign press filled the country with mingled doubt and apprehension. While McKinley in his message to Congress in December had declared that our relations with Cuba should be "close and recip-

rocal," he failed to define the state of the law under which he was acting, or to indicate how long our army would stay, or what the Cuban people should do to get rid of it. The situation from the first was enigmatical and embarrassing.

While it is a well-established principle that military men must obey the orders of those in authority over them, it is equally well understood, by American officers at least, that this obligation is not a sufficient warrant for obedience to illegal orders. In other words, it rests with the officer at his own peril to decide in every important case whether orders from those higher up are legal or illegal. With this well-established principle in mind, I went to Havana shortly after taking charge of my department for the purpose of conferring with Brooke as to what was expected of me as a department commander. While he was most friendly and conciliatory, it soon became apparent that he had no specific orders for his Government and did not know the state of the law under which he was acting. He, therefore, gave me no special instructions, but left me to take my own way through the maze which surrounded us both.

Manifestly, the first thing that required my attention was to ascertain for myself as fully as possible the state of the law under which we were acting in Cuba, and this was done from the statutes, the acts of Congress, the treaties, and the general orders and army regulations then in force. As far as I know, Major Carbaugh, my judge advocate, who had this matter in hand, was the first and only officer, either in the island or out of it, to collect and codify everything bearing on this important

question. Not even the President's messages or proclamations were omitted, and when I declare that the whole codification did not make four foolscap pages, it will be seen that we had but little that was definite or positive to go upon. We were left absolutely to our own conception of the situation and what it required of us. This made it still more important that we should fully understand the condition of the people and of the country by which we were surrounded and with which we had to deal.

To this end the next thing in order was to send out staff officers in every direction and, then, with the civil governor and local officials, to go in person to all the important towns and cities reached by rail, and when there was no railroad to go by horseback to every outlying village and *barrio* in the department.

By these means I visited all parts of both provinces and interviewed every *alcalde,* every member of the *ayuntamiento,* every magistrate, and every important lawyer, doctor, engineer, merchant, planter, priest, schoolmaster, and military officer within my jurisdiction. My secretary made an accurate stenographic typewritten record of all we saw and heard and nothing important escaped our notice. My first trip was to Cardenas, Union de Reyes, Colon, Macariges, and Jovelanos, in the Province of Matanzas. A few weeks later I took in Sagua la Grande, Remedios, Caibarien, and Placetas, on the north side of Santa Clara, and then Villa Clara, in the interior, after which I went to Cienfuegos, at the southern end of the railroad, and thence along the coast by steamer to the old cities of Trinidad and Sancti Spiritus. From the latter

place I went by quartermaster's steam tug to Tunas de Zaza, crossing again to the north side of the island and back by the Jucaro and Moron *trocha* and railroad. I then returned to Castillo and Sancti Spiritus and with a small escort rode northward to the rich planting town of Placetas, where I inspected the detachment of cavalry which had recently taken post there, and then struck out to the southwest, traversing forest, plain, and the beautiful tobacco valley of Manicaragua to Cienfuegos, on the south coast, about one hundred and twenty miles away as the crow flies. By these means I familiarized myself personally with the condition of both provinces, with the lay of the land, and with the state of the people and their industries. But, not satisfied with this, I sent my engineer officer to explore the Cienaga de Zapata, an extensive swamp region in the southern part of Matanzas, extending from a few miles north of the bay of Cochinos to the mouth of the Hatiguanico River. In addition to ascertaining that this extensive region could be easily drained and brought under cultivation, especially for rubber, he also surveyed and reported upon the condition of all the railroads in the department, submitting estimates for their repair and full reports as to the topographical and agricultural features of the thinner settled regions traversed by him. The chief surgeon made a careful examination and report upon the sanitary condition of all the chief cities and towns, as well as of the outlying districts, which might become the source of infection from epidemic disease. The inspector general, chief commissary, and chief quartermaster did similar work in their respective de-

partments. It is safe to say that no area of like extent in the world was ever more thoroughly or more rapidly reported upon with reference to its economic and sanitary conditions. The result of these examinations was set forth in elaborate reports with the necessary sub-reports to the commanding general of the Military Division.

The story was everywhere the same. From the largest cities, Matanzas and Cienfuegos, to the smallest and remotest villages, the greatest poverty and distress prevailed. No repairs of roads, streets, or public buildings had been made for four years, and but little revenue from any source had been collected or disbursed. The people had been driven from the farms and the poorer plantations into the larger towns and cities. Production had been absolutely suspended everywhere except upon the plantations which were rich enough to buy protection, and, although yams, or *boniatos,* could be produced anywhere in quantities within six weeks from the date of planting, it was evident that starvation had been abroad in the land and that if the conditions existing at the close of the war with Spain had continued a few months longer half the population would have been dead of starvation. In other words, Weyler's policy of reconcentration with its manifold horrors was everywhere doing its fatal work, and, had our intervention not put an end to it, there can be but little doubt that a year's further enforcement of it would have destroyed the bulk of the Cuban population. As it was, when we took charge the people had had several months in which to start new crops in a small way. Fortunately, in a country of Cuba's fertile soil and mild climate

the recovery was rapid. But, in view of the fact that every farmhouse, however humble, and every sugar mill, however impoverished by competition with beet-sugar, that the Spaniards could reach had been burned, every banana and fruit tree destroyed, all agricultural implements broken up, and all poultry and cattle killed, the state of impoverishment was pitiful beyond description. In all my travels over the two provinces, an area of something over twelve thousand square miles, or about one-fourth of the entire island, I did not see many acres of land under cultivation, and yet there was not one acre that was not admirably adapted to the production of tropical fruits, coffee, tobacco, or sugar cane. All the country needed was peace, proper economic conditions, and capital. With these everything could be supplied, without them a continuation of the direst poverty and distress was inevitable.

As near as could be ascertained, the total population of the department was at that time slightly in excess of five hundred thousand souls, approximately two-thirds of which were white and one-third colored. We estimated that during the war and the few months immediately following over one-third of the population of Matanzas and one-seventh of the population of the Santa Clara province had been killed or had died of sickness and starvation, leaving behind forty-four thousand widows and sixty-nine thousand orphans in the two provinces.

From the insular statistics it appears that those two provinces at the outbreak of the war contained one million two hundred and sixty-five thousand head of horned cattle, which, according to the report of my officers, had been reduced to forty-one

thousand eight hundred head at its close. In other words, the Spaniards, aided by the insurgents and the people, had in three years killed and eaten about one million two hundred and twenty-five thousand head. During the first six months of our occupation thirty-two thousand seven hundred and seventy-five head had been imported from Central America and the Spanish Main. But, as these were mostly for the use of the plantations, the poor people received but little advantage therefrom. As all cultivation in the island is carried on by the help of oxen, it will be seen from this brief statement that the great and pressing want was work, cattle, agricultural implements, poultry, building materials, and tools. With these means the work of reëstablishing their homes and restoring agriculture would have been easy, but these means were precisely what they could not get. Manifestly, they were imperatively needed, and after gathering the distressing facts I lost no time in asking General Brooke to supply them out of the insular revenues, which were now rapidly accumulating at the various custom houses. My first report was dated February 16, the second June 20, the third August 1, and the fourth September 7, 1899. With appendices and subreports they covered two hundred and fifty pages, and gave all the information properly indexed necessary for a perfect understanding of the case.

I have every reason to believe that General Brooke fully understood it and sympathized deeply with the suffering Cubans. The revenues were ample, and in view of the fact that it required only about $350 to supply an impoverished farmer with a yoke of oxen, a cart, two plows, two hoes, one

harrow, two pigs, ten chickens, an axe, and a pick, and a *bohio,* or cabin, it is difficult to understand why this policy was not adopted. It should be remembered that it was never so much as intimated that the money should be given gratuitously to any one, but that in every case it should be lent to the honest needy with security, at not less than five per cent. interest for one, two, and three years. It was even suggested that as it was paid back it should be added to the capital of an agricultural bank, which all admitted was greatly needed in behalf of that suffering interest. Inasmuch as it was the money of the Cuban people which we were administering as a benevolent intercessor for their benefit, every conceivable argument seemed to favor putting it where it would do most immediate good. When we consider, besides, that the insular revenues were already largely in excess of the current needs for both civil and military administration and many millions were turned over by Brooke to his successor, it is impossible to imagine any sound reason for withholding the help the people needed so badly. Indeed, no good explanation was ever advanced for not offering it to them. But it leaked out finally that someone at Brooke's headquarters thought it would look like "paternalism," whatever that might be, and so it was withheld to the end of the intervention mainly for sanitation, schools, and public roads.

In my argument favoring the proposition I went so far as to ask that the money already set aside for the payment of the unnecessary rural guard which had been established in the province of Santa Clara before I took charge of it, and which it was

proposed to set aside for the payment of a rural guard in the province of Matanzas, should be turned over to me monthly for the purpose of lending it as far as might be necessary in the manner fully set forth in my reports. I urged that the rural guard was neither republican nor American and that, as the municipality was the unit of civil administration, all the authorized police force should belong to, be paid, and controlled by municipal authority, subject, however, to the inspection of a military superintendent belonging to my staff, and this was the policy followed with perfect success and perfect immunity from outbreak and violence in the province of Matanzas till I surrendered the command and left the island. It is but fair to add that General Brooke yielded to my importunities so far as to send me a few thousand dollars, which were most successfully lent out and expended near Matanzas in accordance with my recommendation, with the result that up to the time I left every dollar due had been repaid and, so far as I know, so continued to the end.

Both Bétancourt, the governor of Matanzas, and Gomez, the governor of Santa Clara, the latter now President of the Cuban Republic, offered their guaranty of peace, and gave their personal and official support to the measures which I proposed for the reëstablishment of industry and the relief of the people's most pressing wants, but their intercessions were also in vain.

After I had completed my inspections and formulated my measures for the immediate relief of the people, General Brooke called a meeting of the department commanders at his headquarters in

Havana and asked them to discuss and elaborate a plan for the reëstablishment of agriculture, industry, and commerce. Generals Ludlow, Lee, Carpenter, Wood, and I attended this meeting. I brought forward my proposition, supporting it with details which must have been as true and fully as applicable in every other department as in my own. The matter was discussed fully, pro and con. No one denied the facts as stated by me, but not another officer approved the remedy which I proposed. The four agreed, however, in asking the Governor General to divide the surplus revenue of the island between them according to the population of the several departments. They seemed to have no definite idea of what should be done with the money farther than to clean up the towns, establish proper sanitary conditions, and build a system of country roads from town to town and to the seacoast. All advocated reopening the schools and enlarging the school system. One or two remained silent, but both Ludlow and Wood talked exactly as though they expected to occupy the island and remain in military command indefinitely. Both seemed confident that pacification, which under the law was our sole function, could not be established for years. Ludlow went so far as to say afterward in Washington, probably to the President, that he did not think the Cuban people would become sufficiently pacified or fitted for self-government within a generation. Whatever may have been Wood's real views at that time he gave ready assent to the President's final determination to set up an autonomous government in the island, to withdraw our armed forces, and to make a treaty with the new government which

should determine its relation with the Government of the United States, and which I was the first and only one to recommend.

At the Havana meeting I not only combatted the opinions Ludlow brought forward, but asked him bluntly where he got them. His reply was as frank as my question: "I got them from William McKinley, President of the United States." This was a startling statement, and, as far as I knew, could have had no foundation except that of a personal interview, but, as it seemed to me to be in absolute violation of the actual conditions as well as of the Joint Resolution, I added at once: "No matter if you did get your views from President McKinley, I venture the prediction that we shall all be lifted out of here by the will of the American people within less than two years. They will never consent that the President or any of his subordinates shall violate the public faith as pledged in the Joint Resolution in face of the treaty with Spain and of the conditions as they have been shown to exist in this island." It is with pride that I call attention to the fact that such was afterward the course of history.

It is not within the scope of this narrative to recount the circumstances by which my prediction was made good, but in order that it may be more fully understood I shall briefly state my connection therewith.

In my special report, which was the only one of the kind submitted, "on the industrial, economic, and social conditions" existing in the department, dated September 7, eight months after the occupation of the island, I reiterated and elaborated my

views in reference to the pacification and reconstruction of the provinces under my control. I set forth fully the condition of the disbanded Cuban army and of the people to which it had returned; the suppression of the spirit of retaliation; the reëstablishment of municipal government and of the judicial system with such modifications as had become necessary through the change of government; the reopening of the schools; the restoration of the sugar, tobacco, and cattle industries, and of such other interests as had been deranged or destroyed by the war or by the disturbed economic conditions which had resulted therefrom. After declaring that a perfect state of tranquillity had prevailed from the date of our arrival in the island, I pointed out that the circumstances of the case confronting us had had no parallel in modern history for the destruction of life and the ruin of industry. While I called attention to the fact that distinguished statesmen had confidently suggested British Indian methods for our imitation, I showed that those methods were not applicable to the free people of Cuba; that we had intervened as a friendly ally, not for spoil or conquest, and for the purpose of securing to ourselves a quiet neighborhood and to the Cubans the right of self-government, free from repressive commercial conditions, as well as from the embarrassments of a state religion. The cases were by no means similar. The problems of India and of British domination were entirely different from the problems of Cuba and of the western world, in which oppressive colonial government and the persistent violation of economic laws had always prevailed. Those violations, extending over a period of four

hundred years, had enriched the Spanish official classes, while they had impoverished the Cuban people. Spain herself had spent nearly a thousand years in war against the Moorish invaders. She had succeeded through extraordinary heroism in expelling both the converted and the unconverted, and had followed that by driving out the Jews. She had established the Inquisition and burned heretics without number for a hundred years. She had taken no part in the crusades and had devoted no time to a renaissance or to a reformation. She had discovered and occupied the new world, exterminating the native races and introducing African slavery in her search for gold. She sent her civilization, such as it was, along with her colonists, but seems to have had no adequate conception of justice and mercy. How far these facts may have changed the underlying nature of the Spanish people or modified their civilization, and how far they unfitted the Spanish colonists for the establishment and maintenance of a just and peaceable system of local self-government, I leave others to explain. While I am willing to admit that neither the Cuban, the Mexican, nor the South American Spaniard seemed to have been as well fitted at any time for self-government as were the English, Dutch, and Swedish colonists, I maintain that the Cuban people, with all the faults they may have inherited, would more rapidly fit themselves for self-government if they were freed from the oppressive conditions which they had inherited from, or which had been inflicted upon them by their Spanish ancestors.

I contended then and I contend now that the sooner the Cubans were permitted to establish their

own government, take charge of their own internal and external affairs, and get rid of the restraints and exactions of hostile tariffs and foreign trade restrictions, the sooner they would become a prosperous and enlightened people, capable of peaceable, intelligent, and stable self-government, as well as a source of profit to the United States.

While these conclusions were the merest truisms of political economy, they received but scant and tardy recognition from our own Government. The senators and the representatives in Congress were slow to learn the facts. Even the great independent newspapers of the country were apparently indifferent to the real situation and to the actual state of affairs among the Cuban people. After the first excitement over the establishment of peace and the occupation of the island wore off the Associated Press news agency at Havana fell under the control of an alien ex-convict, who became the facile tool of the grafters and speculators from the States and deliberately perverted the news from all parts of the island to the glorification of the Administration's favorites and to the prejudice of the Cuban people. Every little row between drunken soldiers and idle citizens was magnified into a lawless outbreak. The islanders were called "dagoes" and "niggers" and stigmatized as ignorant and vicious. "Bandoleerism" was said to prevail in all the rural districts, and the severest measures of repression were openly urged upon the military commanders. But, fortunately, all the American newspapers did not belong to the Associated Press. Several of them had able and independent correspondents, who made it their business to see things as they were and to

report them truthfully. Still more fortunately, the *New York Sun,* which, under the control of the late Charles A. Dana, had always been favorable to Cuba and its heroic sons, got from the police records the history of the Havana news agent, and by publishing it on its editorial page eliminated from newspaper activities the person who had already done such irreparable mischief. From that day the American press began to publish more truthful accounts of the conditions prevailing in the island of Cuba. This was especially true of the *Sun,* whose able writers made a careful study of the actual conditions prevailing in the island and of the antecedent causes which produced them. At my suggestion the sugar question, as affected by the commercial war between beet and cane sugar, and as it in turn would certainly affect the actual and future economic condition of Cuba, was fully discussed in the columns of that journal. The discovery of beet sugar and the influence of the Battle of Trafalgar and the Orders in Council upon the establishment of the beet sugar industry were fully and impartially set forth. The system of bounties in favor of beet sugar and of the duties and imposts against cane sugar, were carefully described. The improved methods of sugar manufacture, the consequent world-wide fall in prices, the ruin of the cane sugar planters in all the tropical countries, the increased use of sugar from a luxury of the rich to a daily necessity of the poor throughout the civilized world, together with the far-reaching consequences of these facts, and the important economical and political changes they had produced, were pointed out so clearly that a country storekeeper could understand them. In-

deed, it is safe to say that two articles published in the *Sun* in the year 1899 contained more facts and information than the Administration ever got elsewhere and more wisdom and statesmanship in regard to Cuba and its future than Congress in all its legislation ever utilized or displayed.

During the eighteen months that I remained in command at Matanzas two secretaries of war, one postmaster-general, and many of the leading senators were guests at my headquarters, where all the facts of the actual situation were laid before them. The leading Cubans of all occupations were freely introduced to them, and they were taken, besides, to all the important towns and cities and to several of the most important plantations, where they saw for themselves the conditions as they actually were at the time. There was no room for ignorance or deception. The facts were everywhere perceptible, and no one disputed them, but little perceptible progress was made in the solution of the grave and important questions they presented and illustrated. The grafters and speculators were actively at work, some striving to get concessions and contracts through the government of intervention, others striving to stir up doubt and dissatisfaction in the United States, if not social and political disturbance among the Cuban people. The evident intention was to prolong the military occupation and to delay the establishment of local self-government and independence. But, fortunately, Senator Foraker, with whom I was in close correspondence, had great influence in Congress, by which he succeeded in attaching to the appropriation bill an amendment which positively forbade the granting of any conces-

sions whatever in Porto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines during the period of intervention. While this brought all such schemes to a standstill and was a great relief to the military governors, the actual work of political reconstruction and rehabilitation still languished.

General Brooke was relieved from the supreme command in Cuba after a year's conservative management, during which he knew nothing of the Washington government's real policy "except by induction," and there can be but little doubt that this removal was due to misrepresentation, or that it was made mainly for the further reward of the President's personal friends.

Cushman K. Davis, the distinguished Republican senator from Minnesota, naturally favored the retention of his old friend, Brooke. Several others, recognizing that Brooke was doomed, urged the appointment of Ludlow; a few recommended Wade, while one of the Virginia senators asked for Lee. But by far the larger number, including the leaders of that body, strongly urged my appointment on the ground that I had had many years' experience in civil life and had successfully managed the department with which I had been entrusted, and that my appointment would be approved by the people of both countries. Influence and public considerations, however, were of no avail against the preferences of the President and his family and personal coterie.

## XVII

### CALLED TO WASHINGTON FOR CONFERENCE

Interview with Secretary of War—Conference with the President—Statement to the Senate Committee on Relations with Cuba—Return to Matanzas—Death of my wife—Annual reports and general statements.

Early in January, 1900, shortly after the change of governor generals was made in Cuba, I was summoned to Washington. On my arrival I reported to the Honorable Elihu Root, the newly appointed secretary of war, whom I had known favorably and well from the first year of his advent in New York. After the usual friendly greetings he said in substance:

"General, I am sorry you wrote your reports about the conditions in your department."

While this was somewhat of a surprise, I replied at once:

"What is the matter with my reports, Mr. Secretary? If they are not correct in both statement and conclusion, I wish you would point out wherein they are wrong."

To this he answered with some confusion:

"Oh, they are all right, but I wanted you to support the policy of the Administration."

This was still more surprising, but, pausing long

enough to call his attention to the fact that as secretary of war he was my superior in rank and ought to know that he had only to issue his orders to command my prompt obedience or my immediate resignation, I asked with emphasis and possibly with some show of feeling:

"But what is the policy of the Administration, Mr. Secretary? That is exactly what I want to know, and I have been trying for a year to find out. I have carefully read all the statute laws, orders, and messages in any way connected with Cuba, have asked every officer of the Government and every senator and important person who has visited or written to me, and have, besides, read such of the leading newspapers as could be in any way regarded as inspired. I have utterly failed withal to find that the Administration has any policy whatever in reference to this important matter, or, if it has one, what it is, or how it is to be carried into effect."

This prompt return seemed to slightly embarrass the Secretary, and, instead of giving me a direct reply, he began immediately to discuss the question of establishing municipal government in the island of Cuba, whereupon I called attention to the fact that the departing Spanish Governor General had appointed mayors and members of the *ayuntamientos,* all of whom had taken their offices, and that under Spanish law they had had fair and regular municipal government in the island of Cuba by *alcalde* and *ayuntamiento,* mayor and alderman, a hundred years before there was a city of English-speaking people in the Western Hemisphere. I also called his attention to the Spanish code in respect to this matter, and to the fact that the municipality is the unit

of all civilized government and that the same code prescribed the qualification of Cuban citizenship in terms which are far more precise, fair, and equitable than those contained in our national laws or in many of those enacted by the different states. This led to a fair and full discussion of the subject, in which I contended that little needed to be done by the intervening government in prescribing the qualification of Cuban electors, or in reëstablishing municipal government in the island. No race question and no question of loyalty or disloyalty had yet been raised in the island, and, so far as I could see, no such question could be raised in time to delay or otherwise embarrass the establishment of civil government. The discussion then took a wide range over the affairs of the island as I had reported upon them, and this discussion was renewed day after day for nearly an entire week, during which the Secretary pointed out no misstatement in my reports and joined no issues with me in respect to either the facts as they existed or to the conclusions which I had drawn therefrom. In the most thorough and friendly manner, every aspect of the problem before the Government was fairly and fully considered. I had arrived in Washington early on a Monday morning. Our conferences lasted from an hour to two hours daily and upon one occasion well into the night. At the end of them the Secretary signified his desire that I should see the President, and, as I was entirely under the order of the President and his Secretary, I promptly said as much and that I would go whenever the former was ready to receive me.

The Secretary accompanied me to the White

House and promptly presented me to the President, who received me in a most friendly and cordial manner. He had evidently been fully informed as to the range of the discussion at the War Department, and, although he indicated at the outstart that he was pressed for time and could give me only twenty minutes, he finally gave me full four hours, during which I laid my views and conclusions fully before him. He was, however, a highly interested interlocutor from the first, who asked many questions, and seemed to be entirely satisfied with my prompt and complete replies. I did not hesitate to declare the island absolutely pacified from the date of our occupation and under the Joint Resolution of Congress, which was the controlling law, "pacification" seemed to be the only duty with which we were charged, I unhesitatingly advised that a convention should be called to frame a constitution of government under which, as soon as promulgated, an election should be held for President and members of Congress, and, finally, that as soon as the result was known the newly-elected government should be installed and a treaty should be negotiated between it and the United States, defining fully the relations between the high contracting parties. Pointing out that the census, which I had been the first to recommend, had been ordered, and that it would reveal the fact that the population would be found to be two-thirds white and one-third colored, and that, while no conflict between the races had yet appeared, the dominion of the white race in Cuba rested upon as solid a foundation as it rests upon in our Southern states, I contended that the new government would probably be peaceable and stable. I then

briefly referred to the economic and social conditions prevailing in the island as set forth in my reports, and argued that they not only called for, but fully justified, such "close and reciprocal relations" as would stimulate and develop Cuban industries and commerce and prove equally beneficial to our own people. Under the conditions before and after the war, as well as under the provisions of the Teller Amendment or the Fourth Article of the Joint Resolution, declaring war with Spain, it seemed to be self-evident that no other course was open to him or to the government, and that the sooner this course was adopted and carried into effect the better it would be for all concerned.

Without contesting my statement of fact or my argument, the President, in concluding the audience, which had been extended far beyond the limit placed upon it at its beginning, said without the slightest intimation that his remarks should be regarded as confidential:

"General, I am greatly obliged to you for the information you have given in reference to the condition of affairs in your department and in the island of Cuba. Up to this time we have had no policy in regard to Cuba or our relations therewith, for the simple reason that we have had no time to formulate a policy. But the situation is now entirely clear to me. Henceforth we shall proceed with certainty toward a definite end."

While he did not so far depart from his usual caution as to indicate in terms what his policy was to be, I understood him to imply that it would be substantially in the line I had indicated, and subsequent events confirmed this conclusion. Several

months after my own connection with Cuba and with the department which I had administered had terminated Mr. Root assured me in the most unequivocal terms that I had never written a report nor made a recommendation in reference to Cuba or to the policy which our government should adopt toward that country that did not receive his hearty approval, and yet it was fully another year till our army was withdrawn and the new government had taken charge of Cuban affairs. Many people, doubtless, thought that our occupation of the island, its pacification, and the government which was organized under our supervision constituted not only a most rapid and satisfactory job, but one which was greatly to the credit of the Administration.

Having concluded my interviews with the President and Secretary of War, I was called before the Senate Committee on Relations with Cuba. Senators Platt, chairman, McMillan, Spooner, Teller, Money, and Butler were present, and during the session, which lasted several hours, every aspect of affairs in Cuba was fully considered. Many questions were asked by the senators, all but two of whom had recently visited Cuba. With my last report in hand they were all answered as fully as time and circumstance would allow. Nothing was concealed or glossed over. The conditions of the island and its people as affected by the war, the policy of reconcentration, the great loss of population from the war, the destruction of property, the ruin of industry, agriculture, and commerce, the need of financial help, the relation and proportion of whites to colored, the policy of the Spaniards, their expulsion, the judicial system, and municipal

institutions, the immediate establishment of a stable republican government, and, finally, the negotiation of a treaty which should safeguard our interests and provide for close and reciprocal relations on a free trade basis, or, failing in that, on a preferential basis which should be as liberal as possible, were all considered and every point of interest was elaborated and fully explained.

The meeting, which took place Friday, January 12, 1900, was a most friendly one in which no discordant note was heard and no sign of disagreement or antagonism was developed. Republicans and Democrats vied with each other in striving to draw from me a full and fair statement of every fact and condition bearing upon the military occupation of Cuba, the pacification of its people and the establishment of a republican government which should be stable and peaceful. During my examination I was even asked if to my knowledge any of the other commanders in Cuba held the same views I did in regard to the questions under consideration, and in reply I was obliged to say they did not, but, on the contrary that they would, one and all, probably take the view that we had better go slow in arriving at definite conclusions.

With all the arguments I could bring to bear, I urged the calling of a sovereign convention at an early day, to be held at Santa Clara, rather than at Havana. This convention should receive the assistance of a committee of United States senators and judges in framing a constitution of government, which when finished should not be submitted to the people, but should be declared to be the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba. It should be put im-

mediately into effect, and as soon as the government provided for should be installed and ready for business, a treaty of peace and commerce should be negotiated by the United States with it in such manner and in such terms as would fully define the political and commercial relations of the two countries and provide for carrying the terms of the treaty into effect.

So important did the chairman of the committee regard my statement and the plan I had outlined that he notified all present to regard the hearing and the views which it had brought out as strictly confidential. He even went so far as to direct the official stenographer not to transcribe his notes, and as a matter of fact they were not transcribed or put in print till nearly two years later, long after the policy adopted had been carried into effect and our army withdrawn from the island. Even then the notes were somewhat carelessly transcribed and abridged. But such as they were they were finally clearly printed by the Committee without any revision from me and may now be consulted by the student of our relations with Cuba.[1]

But in order that there may be no misconception in regard to conditions in Cuba during our first intervention, or to the views I held and expressed thereupon, I summarize my testimony substantially as follows:

I have made a thorough study and report upon all conditions prevailing in the central provinces of the island from January 10, 1899, to the same

[1] "Conditions in Cuba," Testimony of General James H. Wilson, Jan. 12, 1900, as printed by the Senate Committee on Relations with Cuba.

date in 1900, and after asking Governor General Brooke first as to the state of the laws of the United States in regard to the military occupation of the island and second as to the policy of the administration in carrying the laws into effect, without getting any definite instructions as to either, I proceeded to visit every town, township, municipality, city, and seaport under my jurisdiction by water and rail, or on horseback, interviewing every intelligent citizen and official from the provincial governor and leader of the insurgent forces to the mayors, judges, councilmen, priests, school-teachers, and planters. Their statements were taken down by my stenographer, and the reports I submitted were based on information gathered in that way.

The two provinces were found to contain a superficial area of about twelve thousand square miles and a population of five hundred and sixty thousand, two-thirds of which were white. They were producing at that time about eighty per cent. of all the sugar and forty-five per cent. of all the tobacco of the island. Their maximum output up to that time was a little over a million tons of sugar, with a probable expansion under favorable conditions to two million and a possible expansion to four million tons per year. It is the best cane sugar growing area in the world.

At the time of the occupation the towns, cities, and reconcentration camps were crowded with starving men, women, and children, dying at the rate of eight hundred per week, and I estimated that within a year under the same heartless policy the entire agricultural population would have perished.

The richer planters had by bribery or by force

protected their plantations and farm buildings from destruction, but nearly all the farm houses, agricultural implements, and growing crops of the poorer people had been destroyed, and nearly all the farm stock of every kind had been killed and eaten. Most of the insular officials under the Spanish régime had thrown up their commissions and withdrawn from the island. The governors recently appointed under the plan of insular autonomy were good men, but, feeling that the insurgent leaders were entitled to the offices, the new governors after a short interval insisted on resigning. The place in Matanzas was given to General Pedro E. Bétancourt, a distinguished physician and surgeon, educated in the States, while that in Santa Clara was given to General José Miguel Gomez, a successful ranchman, of high character and ability, who is now President of the Republic. They had both been despoiled of their property and had taken up arms on the broad principle that they might as well be killed by the Spaniards as starved to death in the woods.

The mayors appointed by the Spaniards before leaving or by us afterward were, without exception, a most excellent set of men. And they, as well as the citizens of all classes, coöperated with us most cordially in maintaining order, relieving and caring for the sick and starving, and in preparing for local self-government. I gave a full account of municipal government, the machinery for the administration of justice, the need for schools, and the means necessary for the restoration of agriculture, industry, and commerce.

I pointed out that there was no friction between the people of my department and the army of occu-

pation, and that the natives were obedient to the law, free from violence and crime, patient, and friendly with those in authority over them, and anxious only that we should tell them what we wanted done and how to do it. Natives and Spaniards were treated alike and counseled to live together in mutual peace and forbearance without reference to the past. They were told in no uncertain terms that bygones must be considered as bygones and that all peaceable citizens must be regarded as equal before the law, and this they seemed to accept as just and fair to all. I also pointed out that Cuba was then, as it is now, the only Spanish-American country in which the whites had always been largely in the majority, that the planters, engineers, doctors, priests, lawyers, and merchants were educated people, but most of the poorer classes were illiterate and comparatively ignorant.

After answering every question fully and fairly I told the committee that, while the planting class and many of the merchants evidently wanted annexation, I had no doubt that the mass of the people wanted a free and independent republic, and to that end expected the United States to carry out the provisions of the Fourth Section of the Joint Resolution, which pledged the United States to exercise neither sovereignty, jurisdiction, nor control in the island of Cuba, except for the pacification thereof, and declared it to be their purpose when that was accomplished to withdraw their armed forces and leave the island and its government to its people.

Obviously, the only question left for consideration was when and how this policy should be carried out. As the pacification was complete, the first thing

to be done was to lay the foundation for a republican government which should be peaceable and stable. In other words, to frame a constitution through the agency of a sovereign convention, which by its terms would go into effect without submission to the people. This convention should be elected by a popular vote under the excellent election laws which the Spaniards had left behind them. I suggested that this convention should have the advice of three or four United States Senators and two justices of the supreme court, standing, as it were, *in loco parentis.*

After adopting a constitution fixing the form and organization of the government, the next step would be to hold an election for president, senators, and congressmen, and when the result was known to install the new government, and give it complete control over all the affairs of the Republic, subject only to the conditions which might be imposed by the Congress of the United States as a necessary safeguard to our common interests.

Meanwhile, I advised a conservative expenditure of the insular revenues, mainly for the promotion of agriculture and the reëstablishment of industry and commerce. I deprecated the expenditure of any money by the government of intervention for roads, harbors, or even for schools, except for school furniture and for starting a normal college for the education of schoolmasters. I would prohibit the granting of franchises for the extraneous development of the island's resources, and would confine the governor general to the maintenance of order and the collection of the revenues.

Having thus formed and installed the new gov-

ernment, I should then proceed to the negotiation of a treaty defining the "close and reciprocal relations" which President McKinley had already wisely said should prevail between the two Republics. I then recommended that that treaty should guarantee to the Cuban people a republican government which should be stable and peaceable, provide for a postal union, for reciprocal free trade relations in natural and manufactured products under a common tariff, and possibly a common supervision of the customs. Failing in that, I advised reciprocal and fair reductions in tariff rates both ways, on the ground that, while this would greatly stimulate agriculture, especially in sugar, tobacco, and fruits, in Cuba, it would give us the control and profits of trade with the island. I urged that some such general arrangement under a new treaty would not only make the greatest boom Cuba had ever had, but it would help to Americanize the island more than anything else.

Finally, I suggested the cession of one or more naval stations to the United States "for the better protection of the American ports in the Gulf of Mexico and of such inter-oceanic canal as might be constructed by the United States at Nicaragua or Panama."

My session with the Senate Committee was a most interesting one, and covered every possible question that the senators could suggest. In conclusion it was decided that my testimony should be regarded as confidential until the Committee should think proper to give it out, but it was printed for the use of the Committee on Relations with Cuba. That it had a controlling influence in the legislation and policy which followed is shown by the fact

that a census was taken, that a sovereign convention was elected and assembled, that it framed and adopted a constitution modeled on our own, that this was followed by the formation and installation of a republican government, which in turn entered into a treaty with the United States, in which the latter was represented by Colonel, now General, Tasker H. Bliss, who had been my chief-of-staff, and was taken from it to be collector of customs for the island during the first occupation. I was consulted no further, and, although the plan I had outlined was adopted, no mention was ever made of my part in it either by the Washington administration or by the Senate.

It is worthy of note, however, that, instead of forming a Customs Union, or Zolverein, under which reciprocal free trade would have been established to the great profit of both countries, a treaty was negotiated in which the United States granted a twenty per cent. reduction of duties on Cuba's principal products, and exacted from forty to eighty per cent. reduction on such articles as she might buy from us.

While the arrangement has worked well and Cuba has greatly profited under it, white wages have risen, immigration of white people has increased, agriculture has been reëstablished, railroads have been built, and commerce has flourished, it is greatly to be regretted that the more liberal policy of absolute free trade had not been adopted, for it is now certain that that would have still more powerfully stimulated the progress of Cuba in all directions referred to above. It is equally certain that it would still more largely have increased the profits of the United States from the joint traffic, stimulated the

emigration of Americans to the mild climate and fruitful land of Cuba, and, finally, added more than all other causes to the peace and stability of the Cuban government.

What will ultimately become of Cuba it is impossible to say, but, having come within the influence of our economic system, it may well be hoped that it will sooner or later be received fully into our political system on such fair and equitable terms as shall be beneficial, as well as satisfactory, to both countries.

Having concluded the business which called me to Washington, I returned at once to my post at Matanzas, where I took up again my decreasing civil and military duties. As long as I remained there my relations with the Military Governor at Havana and with the people of the two provinces were most friendly and satisfactory. I continued to do what I could to preserve the peace, restore agriculture, and promote commerce without calling for or wasting the revenues of the island unnecessarily, and also without controversy of any sort. The remainder of the cooler season was delightful. The troops of my command had been reduced to two regiments of infantry and one of cavalry, or about two thousand one hundred of all arms. Their behavior was all that could have been desired, and their health quite as good as it would have been in the States. With the help of my wife and daughters and of the able and accomplished officers of my staff, the beautiful *Quinta Felix Torres,* which had been rented and refitted for my official residence, became the social center of the region under my control. I received and entertained all the important people, whether

foreign or native, who did me the honor of calling, and once a week I gave a ball for the civil and military officers and their wives, as well as for the leading gentlemen and ladies of Matanzas. It was the beginning of a new and happy era for the entire region. The city was a model of order and cleanliness. The people had returned to their homes, the plantations and *ingenios* had resumed operations, and prosperity was everywhere showing its smiling face.

In the midst of growing contentment and happiness on the morning of April 28, 1900, a terrible calamity befell me and my family. I had just arrived at my office in the town when I was startled by an excited orderly with the information that my wife had been frightfully burned while driving from the *Quinta* to the bathing beach near San Severino. Rushing up the street as rapidly as possible, I found her seated on the sidewalk, surrounded by a crowd of sympathetic but panic-stricken women. Her skirts had been set on fire and completely burned off by a wax friction match which someone had carelessly dropped on the floor of the army springwagon she was using. I drove her home immediately and, although the staff surgeon, aided by her daughters and servants, did all in their power to alleviate her suffering, she died at the end of a few hours in untold agony. Like a bolt out of a clear sky, it overwhelmed us with consternation and grief. The whole city went into mourning, while the President, the cabinet, and our friends throughout the United States sent us by cable and mail the warmest assurances of sympathy and condolence.

She was buried at Wilmington, Delaware, early

in May, 1900, in the cemetery of Holy Trinity, Old Swedes Church, near the last resting place of her parents.

At the close of the fiscal year ending July 1, 1900, I sent in the usual reports required by standing orders and army regulations, and had the satisfaction of calling attention to the fact that the statistics, conclusions, and recommendations of my previous reports had all been fully justified by the census and the lapse of time. The provinces had remained tranquil, the people had resumed their industries as fast and as far as their scanty resources would permit, and the municipal elections had been conducted with perfect order and propriety. In short, everything was in train, with the continued patience and tractability of the people, for Cuba's becoming "at an early date, a rich, independent, and well-governed country."[1]

This report, touching both civil and military affairs, concluded my official connection with the first intervention. Whatever delay there was in organizing the Cuban Republic, it is now known, was due entirely to the Washington government. The first president, Estrada Palma, who had been for many years the financial representative of the insurrection in the United States, was elected and inaugurated without opposition. His administration was conservative, honest, and non-partisan, though it was more or less crippled from the first by a depleted treasury and a lot of continuing contracts made by the Government of Intervention, but withal its period

[1] Annual Report of Brigadier General James H. Wilson, &c., commanding the Department of Matanzas and Santa Clara, July 22, 1900.

of four years was one of rapid recovery and increasing prosperity. Palma was reëlected as a conservative without an opposing candidate, and this gave him, whatever else may be said, a clear and unclouded title to his office, though it did not shield him from the criticism of the radical party, which had come into existence during his first term. Shortly after his second inauguration an armed insurrection took place, and this in turn forced him to call upon the Government of the United States for support. The Second Intervention followed under Secretary Taft and Mr. Magoon, but, instead of supporting President Palma and his Government and requiring the former to retain his office as the head of the constitutional republic and making him and such part of his cabinet as could properly be retained the basis of a reorganization, matters were so managed that Palma felt compelled to withdraw from his high position, along with the cabinet and such part of their congressional supporters as had been declared improperly elected. In other words, an entirely new government was set up under Magoon and the old round of activities organized by the first Government of Intervention was taken up by the second, as a result of which the insular treasury, at the end of a year and a half of poor administration, was left in a worse condition than Palma found that of his predecessor. This had a powerful influence in solidifying the people and the radical party in opposition to the United States and to their management of Cuban affairs. With a broader and more liberal policy and a stricter observance of their duty under the treaty, it is probable that the feelings of the Cuban people

might well have been made much more friendly than they have ever been.

My friend, General José Miguel Gomez, whom I came to respect most highly for his honesty and sound judgment while serving under me as governor of Santa Clara, became the radical candidate for the presidency and was elected by an overwhelming majority. He had always been known as an ardent advocate of Cuban independence and of firm but conservative government. It is fair to observe, however, that his administration was handicapped from the start by the burdens the Second Intervention had placed upon it through unnecessary activities and extravagances. The contracts left behind were not only beyond its strength, but carried with them conditions which imposed upon the new President a policy in some respects wasteful and unrepublican. By increasing and spreading the rural guard far and wide, the Cuban Congress has called into existence a system which is not only useless in war, but can easily be made an instrument in the hands of the President for the maintenance of governmental control against the will of the Cuban people in the time of peace. A tendency in that direction is generally regarded as natural to Spanish-American countries, and obviously should be discouraged upon all occasions in which the United States have a controlling influence. As the Monroe Doctrine requires us to defend the countries of the Western Hemisphere from European aggression and unjust oppression, it should be our established policy, as far as possible, for the present at least, to discourage standing armies and navies for our North and South American neighbors.

# XVIII

## THE BOXER WAR IN CHINA

Condition of affairs in China—Offer my services to the Secretary of War—Ordered to Peking—The only general of any service familiar with theater of operations —In command of South Gate of Forbidden City—Re-establishment of order—Commanded joint American and British forces in capture of the Eight Temples—Count von Waldersee—Return to America—Brigadier General Regular Army—Retired by Special Act of Congress—Summary of Services.

Without devoting further time to the affairs of Cuba, in regard to which I was charged with no responsibility except in my own department, I return to my personal narrative. As may be recalled, I had traveled extensively in China (1885-86) and established close relations with gentlemen of intelligence and influence. Through them I had become deeply interested in the unsettled condition of affairs and the family embarrassments of the Empress Dowager at Peking. That extraordinary woman, confronted by the impending failure of the dynasty through the impotency of the Emperor, had notified the world of his probable death at an early date and of the necessity of finding a new and more promising heir to the throne than the one she had previously chosen.

This led to a wide discussion among the Chinese, as well as among the foreigners resident in the Empire. Nearly every Chinaman, at least, understood that these outgivings indicated the early and, possibly, the violent death of the Emperor Kwang Hsu. The diplomatic corps were deeply moved, and, having but little else to do, took part in the discussion, keeping their own Governments fully informed in regard to its various phases. Mr. Pethick, my most intelligent correspondent, a man long resident in China, and profoundly learned in Chinese history, art, jurisprudence, and affairs, kept me fully informed of all that was taking place. He was one of the first to recognize the serious importance of the Boxer movement and the dangers it threatened. It was through him that I learned how great were the difficulties which confronted the Empress Dowager and how alarming the dangers that were menacing the legations of the treaty powers. At bottom it was a conflict between ignorance and superstition on one side and enlightened progress on the other, and this conflict threatened the life and business interests of every foreigner, including the foreign ministers, and the Christian missionaries in the Empire. The crisis was a grave one sure to involve China in serious complications with the outside world, and this especially aroused my deepest interest. Foreseeing that the troubles would involve our legation and our diplomatic interests, along with those of the other nations, and that we should be compelled to coöperate with them against any outbreak that might occur, I telegraphed the Adjutant General of the army on June 17, 1900, suggesting that in case of actual war my experience and ob-

servations as a traveler in northern China might enable me to render important service to the Government, and I wished to be considered as placing myself entirely at its disposal.

Within a few weeks the telegraph brought the announcement that Admiral Seymour had started to Peking with a relief expedition. A few days later it was announced that the expedition was a failure and had come to a halt, that communication with the legations had been cut off, and that all foreigners were evidently in great peril. A few days later still, the world was startled by the news that Seymour had been defeated and driven back, and that nothing but a powerful intervention of the Treaty Powers with a strong army to be contributed by those nations who were willing to participate in the enterprise, could save the legations and prevent a disaster which would horrify the world. The next thing I heard the Secretary of War had ordered a force from the Philippine Islands to Taku and Tientsin and had announced General Adna R. Chaffee, who had been specially promoted to the rank of major general, as commander of the relief expedition. Three weeks later on July 22 I received a telegram from the Adjutant General notifying me that, as a larger force would probably be sent forward than had at first been intended, the presence of another general would be needed, and that, if agreeable, I would be detailed as second in command to Major General Chaffee. Of course, this was welcome intelligence, and, although it required me to serve under an officer whom I had always outranked, I saw in that no ground for hesitation. The service was a most important one, the General was a sol-

dier of large experience and high character, and I had, besides, placed myself unreservedly at the disposal of the War Department. Within forty-eight hours I turned over the command of my department to General Fitzhugh Lee, forwarded my military and civil reports, sent my horses by the way of Galveston and the Southern Pacific Railroad to San Francisco and started in person on July 24 with my aids-de-camp, via New York and San Francisco, to the scene of my new services in northeastern China.

As it turned out, I was the only general officer of any army connected with the Boxer War who had ever traveled extensively in the actual or probable theater of operation. I had personally ridden over all the country from the Great Wall to the Yangtse Kiang, and from Kaifong fu, the capital of Honan, near the western border of the Great Plains, to the seacoast. In addition, I was well informed as to the disorganized state of the Chinese military forces and of the utter incompetency of the Chinese Government to make war in accordance with modern practice. But I was also fully alive to the defenseless condition of the legations in Peking, and, therefore, felt that they might succumb any day to the outbreak of a local mob or to a frenzied attack of the Boxers, or of the imperial troops, and, hence, put forth my best efforts to reach China and the scene of disturbance at the earliest possible day.

Specially relieved from the delay of quarantine, I tarried in New York only a few hours. Traveling by express trains with my aids-de-camp, Lieutenants Reeves and Turner, I reached San Francisco at midnight of the fifth day, and the next day,

August 3, at noon, I left for Yokohama and Nagasaki, via Honolulu, on the fast Japanese steamer *America Maru*. Touching for a few hours at Honolulu and ten days later at Yokohama, where I changed steamers, I pushed on through the Inland Sea to Nagasaki, where the United States transport *Indiana* was waiting for me. While far from fast, she landed me on the third day at Taku, the mouth of the Peiho, just thirty-seven days from Cuba. As far as I know, this is the quickest trip ever made from that island to northeastern China. With only a day's delay at Tientsin, some thirty miles inland, I took train for Yangtsun, from which place I reached Peking on September 6, escorted by a small detachment of the Sixth United States Cavalry under Lieutenant C. D. Rhodes, afterward my adjutant. Although the distance covered was about twelve thousand miles, equal to half the world's circumference, and involved four steamship voyages, three railway trips, and a march of fifty miles overland, the entire distance was made without accident or delay and with no other anxiety than that which was natural to an officer who was striving to reach the scene of what might end in a world tragedy. Fortunately, I found all semblance of actual war had been over for three weeks and a state of perfect calm prevailing.

As I have given a condensed but comprehensive account of the origin, progress, and principal events of the Boxer Rebellion, the relief of the legations, and the reëstablishment of peace in a new edition of my little book on China,[1] to which I refer for de-

[1] "China, &c., Together with An Account of the Boxer War," by James Harrison Wilson, D. Appleton & Co., 1901.

tails, comments, and opinions, I shall content myself here with a few personal reminiscences.

My trip from Taku and Tientsin to Peking was over familiar ground, but the villages had been burned and looted by the allied columns, the people had fled from their homes, their cattle, poultry, and provisions had been carried off, and their growing crops had been broken down and trampled under foot. Desolation prevailed along the entire route, and, although the fighting had ended three weeks before, the sedgy banks of the Peiho were reeking with the stench from the floating bodies of dead Chinamen. At Tungchow, the port of Peking on the Peiho, I heard of one well in which several women had drowned themselves to escape what they regarded as a worse fate. It was evident on all sides that the allied armies had spared no Chinaman with arms, or even with the appearance of arms in his hands, but had been conducting war on the old plan of kill, ravish, burn, and destroy. The people of all ages and conditions, men, women, and children, had fled as from a besom of destruction, leaving their possessions to the plunderer and the torch.

A few weeks later in conversation with the grave and dignified Field Marshal von Waldersee, who had been chosen generalissimo of the allied forces on account of seniority, in regard to the relative practice of Europeans, Asiatics, and Americans in conducting warfare, I took occasion to condemn as a recrudescence of barbarism the wholesale practice of violence, outrage, and robbery which had evidently characterized the campaign on the part of the Europeans and Asiatics. In doing so I expressed the thought that, while our forbears ap-

peared to have left the customs of the Middle Ages behind when they came to America, their racial kinsmen from European countries, greatly to my surprise, seemed to return naturally to the cruelties of primitive man. I frankly confessed that I could not understand it. To this remark the humane and courtly Field Marshal replied with a sigh: "Ah, General, I regret to say that Europeans, no matter whence they come, have never abandoned the cruel and outrageous practices which you so justly condemn."

On arriving at Peking I dismounted at the American legation, where the Minister and his Secretary, my friend, Herbert G. Squiers, an ex-officer of our regular army, were on the lookout for me. They gave me unstinted hospitality and during the week I remained the guest of the Secretary and his family they told me the interesting story of the defense of the legations, in which they modestly minimized the prominent and creditable part they had taken. Here again I met my friend Pethick, the experienced and learned sinalogue, who, it will be remembered, had served as a trooper in the Twenty-second New York Cavalry under me in the War of the Rebellion. True to the gallant instincts of his youth, he had taken a modest but essential part with Captain Meyers, commanding the Legation Guard of U. S. Marines, in the capture of the enemy's advanced posts on the city wall and in holding that commanding position against all subsequent attacks. What a fortunate thing it was for all the legations and for the Christian converts who flocked into them that the American minister, Mr. Conger, an ex-major of Illinois Infantry Volunteers, had had four years of

strenuous marching and fighting during the Civil War, while Sir Claude MacDonald, the British minister, the elected commander-in-chief, had had much experience in the English army! With these two veterans in daily council and mutual support, the gallant detachment of United States Marines, aided and encouraged by Squiers and Pethick, as well as by their sick and wounded captain, successfully guarded both legations against attack from the direction of the city walls night and day till the coming of the allied columns put an end to the siege.

General Chaffee received me with a hearty welcome and with marked courtesy and consideration and at once assigned me to the command of all the American troops in and about Peking. In addition, he gave me special charge over the main entrance to the Forbidden City, as well as over the imperial palaces, residences, and temples, including the quarters occupied by the concubines and eunuchs which the imperial court in the hurry of their fight had left behind. He also put me in charge of that part of the Chinese city which had been allotted to the American troops. This was a great responsibility, but all the officers of the American contingent marines and troops of the line were regulars and a number of them graduates of West Point, who knew exactly how to obey orders, as well as how to take care of their commands and to respect the rights of the people with whose interests they were charged and for whose good order they were held responsible. Through Pethick, who was the best Chinese scholar among the foreigners, my orders and instructions were translated into Chinese and posted in all public places so that the merchants and men of authority

could read them freely and without interruption. So far as I know, not a single breach of discipline occurred after that. The result was magical. Slowly at first, but certainly and completely in the end, the Chinese came to understand that not only life but property of every sort was safe in the American quarter. In a few days the streets had been policed, the markets and shops were reopened, and the people of all classes had apparently resumed their daily occupations as though no foreign soldiers were at hand or disposed to make them afraid. It is a pleasure to add that our example was followed by the Japanese with the same happy results.

I had early established my headquarters at the fine old Temple of Agriculture, on the edge of an extensive grove of cedars not less than a thousand years old, and at once proceeded to familiarize myself with the station of the various detachments, charging their officers specially with supervising the work of cleaning the streets and open spaces, and with the establishment and maintenance of proper sanitary conditions in the precincts under their jurisdiction. As Major Ives, my chief surgeon in Cuba, again came within reach and knew from long experience exactly what was to be done, no necessary precaution was neglected. Every line officer, as well as every surgeon, received full instruction and gave the heartiest and most intelligent cooperation.

Finally, to broaden and more fully define our purposes and methods, I put in force the provisions of the military code, prepared by the distinguished Professor Lieber and promulgated by Secretary Stanton April 24, 1863, in General Orders Number

100, for "the government of the armies of the United States in the field." It will be recalled that those instructions define in precise terms both martial law and the customs of war, in actual campaign as well as in the occupation of captured territory. It is a just, liberal, and humane code, the first of the kind, I believe, ever formally issued by a civilized nation for the government of its armies, and, although I had put its principles into effect in the Department of Matanzas and Santa Clara, this was the first and only time, so far as I know, that they were ever formally enforced in an Asiatic country.

It will not be denied that a few men and officers of the marine detachment, during the earlier days of the occupation had appropriated abandoned property and works of art, but, as these could not be used for military purposes, the quartermasters were directed to take charge of them in accordance with standing orders and army regulations, to sell them at public auction, to take the money received from the sale into their regular accounts and to apply it to supplying the current wants of the command. It is confidently believed that no part of the regular army got off with either silks, carvings, lacquers, or porcelains in the way of loot, and that whatever they carried back to the States they purchased at the regular daily sales in the British quarter or at the special sales of our own quartermasters. It is a matter of pride that so long, at least, as I remained in command, my orders as above specified were strictly and cheerfully observed.

Shortly after arriving at Peking it was reported that the Boxer general headquarters had been estab-

lished at Pa-ta-Chow, the Eight Temples in the foothills some twelve miles northwest of the city, and that the place was held by a strong force of Boxers, or Chinese insurgents. It was decided by the allied commanders that an expedition should be sent out to capture those headquarters, to destroy the arsenal a few miles further on, and to scatter the forces which might be found in that region. The duty of carrying this policy into effect was assigned to the American and British contingents, and, very much to my surprise, I was designated to command the expedition of the joint forces. To what influence I owed that honor I never knew, but I always supposed that it was partly due to the fact that I had visited the Eight Temples during my trip to China in 1885-86, and that I was familiar with the topography of the surrounding country. At all events, I took charge of the expeditionary force and sallied out from Peking with a column of about two thousand men, made up of two battalions of the Ninth and one of the Fourteenth Infantry, under Major Quinton, one section of Riley's battery, a small detachment of the Sixth Cavalry of our army, and from the British force, the Welsh fusileers, two battalions and one extra company of native Hindu troops, Baluchs, Sikhs and Pathans, followed by a large number of Hindu packers. As Lieutenant General Sir Alfred Gazelee of the British contingent, and his Adjutant, Brigadier General Barrow, outranked me and my Adjutant, Lieutenant C. D. Rhodes, they did not accompany the expedition, but generously put their officers and troops absolutely under my command.

Commencing the march at 3 P. M. on September

16, 1900, to the southwest and toward the Hun-ho for the purpose of misleading the enemy, the whole force bivouacked at Lin Ko Chow after dark that night. At two o'clock the next morning we took the road to the north and by a rapid march toward the hills found ourselves shortly after daylight in the vicinity of the Temples. Here I divided the force into two detachments, the first composed of the Baluch battalion and the Fourteenth United States Infantry, which I dispatched under the supervision of my aid-de-camp, Mr. Turner, guided by Mr. Squiers, and Mr. Jameson, both Americans, long resident in the country and familiar with the locality, to make a turning movement through the hills to the rear of the Temples about the White Pagoda. The main body of the command pushed at the proper time to the opening in the foothills on the slopes of which the Temples were situated. This completed the investment of the position except to the eastward, on which side a detachment of German troops was expected to take position.

The combined movements and operations were attended by complete success. The Baluchs, who were famous as mountain climbers, were kept in advance, closely followed by the Fourteenth U. S. Infantry, but, instead of "skipping from rock to rock like mountain goats," as we had been led to believe they would do, the Baluchs soon became fatigued and, as Jameson afterward described it, they halted "without skipping a single rock," while the Americans pushed by them and were the first not only to reach the summit, but to descend into the valley behind the Boxer position. With but little delay both battalions opened fire on the Boxers in and about

the White Pagoda, the Americans pressing forward and cutting off the retreat of the main body, while a few broke from their position and, scattering up the bare hillsides and ravines to the northeastward, succeeded in making their escape to the open country. The principal force of Anglo-Americans, moving forward under the hills at the proper moment, with a few minutes of light skirmishing, promptly closed in on the Temples without casualty or accident of any sort. When I reached the Boxer shrine, at or near Boxer headquarters, I found the altar still smoking with incense and the few native women that were left behind, running hither and yon with heart-rending shrieks and frenzied excitement.

While the fugitives were pursued far enough to discover that they had neither coherence nor organization and a number of prisoners were taken, the affair was soon ended and the main body of the attacking force went into bivouac for breakfast and rest while the Baluchs went to looting. The victory was an easy one. Nine Boxers in uniform were killed, while many more were wounded and carried off, but, sadly enough, the only wounded person I actually saw was a Chinese woman who had been hit in the elbow by a stray rifle shot. Of course, she received surgical attention at once and was reassured and pacified, without further injury, but apparently much to her surprise.

The whole affair was over before eight o'clock, and a half hour later the British Adjutant General joined us. After profuse congratulations and praises for the skillful manner in which the joint operations had been conducted, he asked permission in the name of Sir Claude MacDonald to destroy

the beautiful white porcelain pagoda which had stood on the brow of the hill overlooking the plains beyond for a thousand years, and was still as fresh in appearance as the day it was built. Amazed at the request, which seemed to be made in a spirit of barbarism, I declared at once that I could not countenance the destruction of such a beautiful building while I remained in command of the joint forces. Desirous, however, of knowing what justification could be advanced in support of this strange request, I asked General Barrow why the British Minister wanted to destroy so notable a landmark. His reply was still more amazing, for he explained at once that if the Christians did not destroy this famous Chinese temple, the Chinese, who had destroyed many missionary churches, would conclude that their gods to whom the Pagoda was dedicated were more powerful than the God of the Christians. A brief conversation followed, in which I stood by my disapproval of the proposition, but concluded with the remark that I should dissolve the Anglo-American command and withdraw our contingent to Peking at an early hour the next morning, after which the British Minister and the British commander would, of course, be free to take such action as they might think proper. And there the matter rested that night and the next morning till I took up my return march, but I regret to add that we had hardly got strung out in the plain below when the British contingent, which had already undermined the foundation of the pagoda, exploded a charge of gunpowder under its base and toppled the world-famed structure over in irretrievable ruin.

The curious and inexcusable sequel to this inci-

dent was that the Chinese correspondent of the *London Times*, a Mr. Middleton, I believe, cabled that journal that the White Pagoda had been destroyed by my command and authority. Of course, news of this message reached me a few days later, whereupon I demanded that the correspondent should correct his inexcusable misstatement by cable at the earliest possible moment and this, I believe, was finally done. But the event left a most unfavorable impression in my mind, both on account of the views brought forward by the British Minister and of the unfair account the correspondent made haste to give of it without even taking the trouble to learn the real facts of the case as they would have been given. The whole performance, although but seldom mentioned, was generally regarded by the allies as an act of superstitious vandalism, alike discreditable to the British officers concerned and to the British civilization which they represented.

While I held command at Peking during the absence of General Chaffee, I sent out several other small expeditions to scour the country east, southeast, and south of the city, to break up predatory Boxer bands, to gather in the property, and to protect the Chinese converts at the missionary stations, but in no instance did they discover any considerable armed force, nor any disturbance among the people. Everywhere outside of the line of the allied operations they found peace, order, and industry prevailing as though there had been neither violence nor war in the land. Whether this was due to the ignorance or to the duplicity of the people, I leave others to decide. It has always been somewhat of a puzzle to me.

Our daily life in Peking was full of interest, for, although every officer of the imperial Government had disappeared with the Empress Dowager and the court and the war had come to an end, the allied powers were continuing their measures to establish a definite and lasting peace. Field Marshal Count von Waldersee was the last of the commanders to arrive, and owing both to his high character and his unusual rank the other commanders and the members of the Diplomatic Corps received him with every honor. Linevitch, the sturdy old Russian; Gazelee, the polished Briton; Yamaguchi, the modern Japanese, followed by Chaffee and myself, with our staff officers in full uniform, escorted by a troop of the Sixth Cavalry, met the Field Marshal outside the walls on the Tung Chow road and, after extending the usual military courtesies, escorted him in state to his headquarters in the imperial city. The next day we called upon him formally, but without notice. Not finding him within, we renewed our call the following afternoon, according to appointment, and were received with a blare of trumpets and a salute of the guard. The stately Field Marshal himself came to the front and after a formal welcome escorted us to his private quarters. Here showing us to seats and taking one himself, he scanned us closely, but kindly. After gathering in the details, which he evidently approved, he turned to me and said in excellent English, which he had doubtless cultivated by daily conversation with his American wife:

"And that is the full uniform of an American general. I never saw it before, but it is mighty fine!"

This, of course, broke the ice and led to a friendly conversation, early in which he showed us with pride the photograph of the Countess von Waldersee and signified his decided admiration for American women. This won our sympathy at once, and, although the American contingent never formally placed itself under his command, both Chaffee and I became quite intimate with him. Shortly afterward Chaffee went again to Tientsin for a fortnight, during which I had occasion to see the Field Marshal frequently. I took luncheon with him and his personal staff several times, and had many conversations with them. His chief-of-staff, Major General von Schwartzoff, and his assistant, Count von York, were officers of great merit, the first of whom lost his life in a fire which burned the headquarters building in which he was sleeping, while the second was asphyxiated north of the Great Wall by the fumes from a brazier of smouldering charcoal. It was a sad loss to the Field Marshal and in the latter case an unfortunate ending to the career of one who had been counted on to fill the place of Von Moltke, the great German chief-of-staff.

The German expedition to Paoting-fu was made before their death, and, although its object was far from apparent, Mr. Turner, my aid-de-camp, who represented me on Von Waldersee's staff, gave both him and his officers high praise for the thoroughness with which they did their work. Of course, he was there to help and to observe, and he seems to have won the good opinion of all the officers, especially those of the Japanese staff, who did not hesitate to assure me on their return that they felt far more at home with my staff and the American

officers than with those of any other country. This was probably because most of the Europeans, specially the English, seemed to look down upon them very much as Li Hung Chang did before the Japan-Chinese War.

After the expedition to Paoting-fu had started and General Chaffee had returned to Peking, I gave him a review of the troops serving under my command. This took place on October 3 between the Temple of Agriculture and the Temple of Heaven on the Chien Men, a wide street, running north between broad open spaces to the principal southern gate of the Tartar city. It was admirably adapted to the purpose for which we used it, the weather was fine, and many of the generals, ministers, attachés, and officers of the various contingents were present in full uniform.

The Ninth and Fourteenth Infantry, the marine battalion, six troops of the Sixth Cavalry, and Riley's battery of six rifled guns, all in excellent condition and equipment and constituting as compact and complete a brigade of fighting men as ever made its appearance in the Far East, marched by in column of companies, sections, and troops, with their flags and guidons fluttering gayly, to the music of the consolidated bands playing "A Hot Time in the Old Town To-night!" The rank and file were all young, stalwart, and fit, their service uniforms were becoming, their arms in perfect condition, and their alignment and marching all that could be expected of the finest veterans in the world.

The scene was one never before witnessed in China, and never imitated afterward. The invited guests were surprised and enthusiastic, and the

whole occasion was one which deeply impressed all, including the Chinese, who saw it from afar. After the troops had marched to their encampments the invited guests were escorted to my headquarters in the Temple of Agriculture, where they were regaled with an abundant supply of punch and light refreshments, with the usual assortment of American airs from our military bands. All seemed delighted with our entertainment. This was particularly true of the East Indian officers, whose handsome uniforms and soldierly bearing added to the interest of the occasion. We were particularly struck, however, by the fact that the lowest white officers in rank took social precedence of even the Indian field officers. If this is the common rule in the native army, it must ultimately give our British cousins a good deal of trouble before they are through with it.

The remainder of my stay in Peking was passed in the routine duties of administration. Chaffee and I made expeditions to the nearby places of interest frequently, and on one occasion rode entirely around the city with several staff officers and orderlies on the top of the wall, which was furnished with ramps at various points, where we went up or down without dismounting. The trip of fifteen or sixteen miles gave us a splendid view of the city and surrounding plains and was one to be long remembered.

After the beginning of proceedings looking to peace, Secretary Hay of the Department of State, looking upon me as an expert "China hand," proposed that I should be associated with Mr. Rockhill and Minister Conger as commissioners to represent our Government in the negotiations, but Mr. Con-

ger made objections on the ground that the commission would be larger than any other and therefore too cumbersome, and on consideration this view was accepted. As my military work was at an end, I was relieved from further service and returned to the States by the way of San Francisco, reaching home by the middle of December, 1900.

President McKinley received me with every mark of consideration, and, after thanking me for my services in China, as well as in Cuba, told me that he intended to ask Congress for authority to transfer Fitzhugh Lee, Joseph Wheeler, and myself to the regular army, and then retire us with the rank of brigadier general. Of course, I was gratified at this very unusual proposition, recognizing it as good policy so far as concerned Lee and Wheeler, both of whom had served with high rank and great distinction in the Confederate Army, but I then called the President's attention to the fact that I was not eligible for retirement either by age, continuous service, or infirmities. He, however, with good nature and kindness, waived all that, and subsequently, at his request, Congress passed a special act to put us on the retired list, accordingly, and that was done in due time.

Before leaving Washington, Mr. Root, the secretary of war, asked what further duty or assignment I wanted, whereupon I replied, none that he could give me. I then added that I had reëntered the army to take part in any war the Government might have on hand, but, as it had reëstablished peace with all powers and potentates, I was ready to return again to civil life and take up my private business. I had no active interest in military af-

fairs except in times of war, and no desire but to resume the pursuits of peace. That, he was good enough to reply, was exactly what he expected me to say, and so we parted.

I returned to my family and home at Wilmington, where I have remained ever since, except for three months, during which, accompanied by my aids-de-camp, Lieutenant Colonel John Biddle of the engineers, Lieutenant Colonel Henry D. Borup of the ordnance, my secretary, F. R. Mayer, and two daughters, I represented the army, under appointment from President Roosevelt, at the coronation of King Edward VII in 1902. This was an interesting event. We were all duly presented at court, and I placed a wreath on Queen Victoria's tomb at Windsor, and, although the coronation was delayed two months by the King's illness, my party were specially, but informally, invited to return to the adjourned ceremony, which we did, much to our personal edification and enjoyment.

This was my last appearance in public life, and, although still enjoying unimpaired health and vigor, and taking an unabated interest in everything that concerns the public welfare and the prosperity and greatness of our common country, I have little else to do but to publish these historical glimpses of the wars and events in which I took part according to my opportunities.

If called upon to summarize my most notable services, I should start with the part I played in the Port Royal expedition, particularly in leading the way across the salt marshes and planting the battery which isolated Fort Pulaski and made its surrender a mere question of time.

I regard my services on McClellan's staff during the Antietam campaign and my personal suggestions in regard to the course McClellan should pursue when relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac as worthy of commendation. I have never doubted that, had he followed my advice to the end, he would have been elected President of the United States, or come far nearer to that destiny than he did.

The part I took as engineer and assistant inspector general on General Grant's staff in the Vicksburg and Chattanooga campaign, as set forth in the foregoing narrative, I have never doubted, won General Grant's confidence and friendship. This is shown, not only by his words, but by the fact that through his recommendation I gained the rank of brigadier general of volunteers.

I have always regarded my brief but rapid work in reorganizing and administering the Cavalry Bureau, the opportunity for which I owed principally to Charles A. Dana, assistant secretary of war, as having been highly valuable, for it resulted in giving the cavalry service more and better horses, arms and equipments than it ever had before. My revised regulations for the inspection of horses were a large factor, not only in giving Sheridan's cavalry better and improving mounts to the end, but in enabling me to regenerate and make invincible the Cavalry Corps of the Military Division of the Mississippi.

While my assignment to command the Third Cavalry Division, Army of the Potomac, over my seniors may have been an injustice to them, I have always held that the services I rendered in the Wilderness, at the Yellow Tavern, Chesterfield Court

House, Hanover Court House, Ashland Station, Hawes Shop, the crossing of the Chickahominy, St. Mary's Church, and the passage of the James were as valuable as the operations of any division in the Cavalry Corps, while my success in breaking and disabling the railroads in southern Virginia was the severest blow the cavalry ever struck the Confederacy, till Five Forks, Appomattox, and Selma ended it.

The good results produced by my division at Kearneyville and afterward at Winchester, were largely due in both cases to the Spencer carbines with which I armed it. This was besides the first instance of the close and effective coöperation of cavalry with infantry up to that date in Virginia.

Military writers generally regard my reorganization of Sherman's cavalry, its services at Columbia, its defeat of Forrest at Franklin, and its collection into a single corps in front of Hood's invading army as notable achievements. The impressment of horses and the increase of the corps' effective force in ten days to twelve thousand men, who broke through Hood's line at Nashville, turned his flank, captured his batteries, took his left wing in reverse, and compelled his army to retreat in disorder, closely pursued through the rain, frost, mud, and ice of midwinter, have been cited as the best instance of proper coöperation between cavalry and infantry in the War for the Union.

The collection of twenty-seven thousand men, or five divisions of cavalry, with proper artillery in midwinter into cantonments at and near Gravelly Springs, seventeen thousand of whom were well horsed and armed, was a creditable performance.

The system of instruction, drill, and discipline there instituted, lasting for ten weeks, produced most extraordinary results, and, although I detached one full division to Canby, another to middle Tennessee, and still another to remain in camp with orders to follow when mounted, I took with me three divisions with twelve thousand five hundred men mounted and one brigade of one thousand five hundred dismounted. These figures seem to fully justify the policy of concentrating and using cavalry in masses, instead of scattering it far and wide in detachments, as had been the previous practice in the West.

Finally, if anything further is needed to commend this policy it is found in the history of what turned out to be the "Last Campaign of the War." I refer, of course, to that which defeated Forrest, scattered his forces, captured Selma, destroyed the armory, factory, arsenal, storehouse, and shipyard at that place, and which opened the way to Montgomery, West Point, and Columbus, to the passage of the Chattahoochee River into Georgia, to the occupation of Macon, Atlanta, Augusta, and Milledgeville, and, finally, to the capture of Jefferson Davis with his aids-de-camp and several of his cabinet trying to make their way to the trans-Mississippi Department for the purpose of continuing the war.

While General Lee has been credited with declining to carry on guerrilla warfare and to the noble and disinterested example which gave the country peace, it must not be forgotten that the capture of Selma and its supplies on April 2, of which he doubtless heard before he surrendered on April 9, must have convinced him, as it certainly did Joseph E. Johnston and other leading generals and mem-

bers of the Confederate cabinet, that the end had come and that further resistance was useless.

If the Confederate soldiers and statesmen had any doubt on this question after our destructive march through Alabama and Georgia along their main artery of inter-communication, it was necessarily ended by the capture of Davis and his suite and his imprisonment at Fortress Monroe. The fact is Davis's official work ended at Danville. Aided by Lee, Johnston, and Forrest, he had got all out of the Confederate army that was in it, and, as shown by his final cabinet conference at Charlotte, needed only the ruin I had committed further south, followed by his own capture as a fugitive, to convince even him that the Union was triumphant and indestructible.

That I was able a third of a century after the close of the Civil War to resume my sword and do my fair share as a general officer in two later wars was an interesting, if not unique, experience, and will, I hope, afford all justification necessary for the personal reminiscences touching my part therein and the great men who have honored me by their friendships or by the reverse.

My success as a government engineer speaks for itself. The removal of the rapids of the Mississippi at Rock Island and the neutralization of those at Keokuk were works of a pioneer character. The surveys and plans submitted by me in 1868-9 for cutting down the summit level and making a line of deep navigation from Lake Michigan to the Illinois River were, in the main, adopted and carried into effect without serious modification many years afterward.

The plans which I supervised, controlled, and carried into effect for the location, construction, and equipment of the Sixth Avenue Elevated Railroad between the Battery and Central Park, New York City, was pioneer work which served as guides for all similar undertakings till the introduction of electrical power for the operation of city railroads.

But the undertaking in civil life that gave me the greatest satisfaction was the construction of the St. Louis and Southeastern Railroad, connecting Evansville and my native town on the Ohio with St. Louis. It led to the purchase of the roads from Evansville to Nashville and their consolidation into a through line, which gave both St. Louis and Chicago the shortest and most direct connection with the central Southern states. It was entirely successful till the breakdown of 1873, at which time the principal connecting railroads south shut off its business and forced it into bankruptcy, which in turn wiped out the stock, and on the foreclosure of the bonds made the road a part of the Louisville and Nashville system, where it has since proved profitable to the purchasers, as well as to the country through which it runs. But that is not the best of it. It opened up in connection with our other railroads the entire region, which was almost a forest much of the way, from St. Louis to Nashville, from St. Louis to Louisville, and from Cairo to Vincennes, to progress in all its branches. From backwoods and the rudest sort of country life, it has become the abode of industry, plenty, good schools, flourishing churches, and thriving towns and villages, in which prohibition is the rule and lawlessness the exception.

While I lost my time and the profit I had fairly earned, I feel that my associates and I did good work, and I sincerely rejoice, not only in having been a pioneer in it, but that I have been permitted to live and to see its full fruition. I know of no case in the whole country that did more good to the people served by those lines in southern Illinois, for the construction of which I was largely responsible.

In concluding this work I trust I shall be pardoned if I venture to say, in no boastful spirit, I have played my part as it came to me in war and peace, and under all circumstances to the best of my abilities and opportunities, and always and everywhere according to the soldier's motto: "*Aut veniam viam, aut feciam!*"

# APPENDIX

## CONDITION OF THE SOUTH AT THE CLOSE OF THE WAR OF THE REBELLION

### A REPORT MADE TO THE WAR DEPARTMENT

MACON, GEORGIA, November 23, 1865.

It has occurred to me that the results of my observation during and since the Rebellion might throw some light upon the various questions growing out of the abolition of slavery, and thereby assist the public in obtaining a clear understanding of the condition of the South at this time. It is important that intelligent men should deal with these questions dispassionately and discuss them without acerbity or prejudice. They are no longer local, but concern the entire nation. The day of strife is past, and the era for free thought has at last dawned upon the South. It is hardly necessary to assure the reader that in view of these facts I shall endeavor to write plainly and say nothing but what is susceptible of proof.

Many of our writers have said, and not a few of our people have believed, that the suppression of the rebellion had settled the negro question, but this is a grave mistake. That question is now fairly open for discussion, and justly claims our serious attention. Upon its practical solution depend the prosperity of the entire South and the welfare of a race. How can the freedmen be best protected in their personal, social, and civil rights, be made a self-sustaining and useful element in society, and be secured in the benefits of their own labor and intelligence, with the privilege of developing both to the utmost of their capabilities?

The discussion will involve a statement of the rights of freedmen, the present moral, intellectual, and physical condition of the negroes, the influences which have been at work upon both white and black society, as well as the means necessary to secure simple justice to all persons under the laws of the United States. An exhaustive discussion of these subjects would require months of minute research and patient industry, and would fill an entire volume; but I shall endeavor to compress into this chapter all that is essential.

The rights of freemen under our Government are by no means generally understood in the South; the rights of freedmen, or people of color emancipated by the President's Proclamation, and the successful enforcement of the latter by the army, have neither been clearly defined nor generally recognized. A part of the difficulty arises from the use of terms regarded as synonymous by Northern people, for purposes of the law, but which in the minds of Southern people have a widely different meaning. Free men are white and were always free—freedmen are blacks, and were once slaves, but by the force of arms are so no longer. This much, and no more, the Southern people as a class admit. In other words, the freedman is "a negro—a two-legged, vertebrate animal, good enough as a machine in his place, but entitled to no consideration out of it, valuable as a slave, but worthless as a freeman, and possessed of no rights which a white man is bound to respect." But few Southern men have surrendered their convictions based upon "the Bible right to enslave the descendants of Ham," or have yielded assent to the constitutionality of the Emancipation Proclamation. Many say, I have no doubt, sincerely, they are glad slavery has ceased to exist, but they see no more plainly to-day than ten years ago the moral wrong of withholding liberty from a fellow man. The majority do not acknowledge the negro as a fellow man; they are bound to him by no relation except those established for self-interest, and acknowledge no obligation except that

which may be mentioned "in the bond." It is no uncommon thing for them to denounce abolitionism as bitterly as they did before the war. I have known of one case in which a minister of the Gospel, thoroughly identified with the Rebellion, was charged by members of his church with the advocacy of miscegenation, because in a sermon upon practical Christianity he announced the Bible doctrine of the unity of the human family! The sentiment which underlies these facts is not universal, but it is the popular and positive one, which opposes liberal views, and which, conjoined with ignorance and prejudice, prevents substantial progress, and keeps from the people a knowledge of what constitutes the rights and duties of freemen. It is no exaggeration to say that no Southern newspaper has yet dared to divest itself of prejudice and discuss that subject truthfully, fearlessly, and persistently, and but few have adverted to it in any other than a tone of expedient submission to national dictation. There is no such thing yet as a free press in the South, nor can there be till free thought becomes habitual. The feeble and timid efforts of a newspaper in the city of Macon to conduct itself in advocacy of "the restoration of the civil order, and the existence of the national unity under the Constitution and the laws," subjected its editor to so much insult and contumely that he was compelled to appeal to military authority for protection.

No public man of importance in this region, unless I except Mr. James Johnson of Columbus, has had the nerve to tell his people the plain, unvarnished truth, or to show them clearly their relations to the general Government and what would be required of them. His speeches were regarded as too radical on the points touching freedmen, and have not been published; or, if published at all, have been changed to suit the popular temper. No organic law has yet been framed in the South which secures to the negroes the simplest rights of freemen, no bill of rights which declares that they shall not be punished for crimes,

except upon legal conviction thereof, or that enables them to sue and be sued, acquire and convey title to property, and testify in courts. Without further enumeration, it may be clearly seen that no Southern state has yet framed a constitution strictly republican in form—since none has yet provided for the security of those rights justly regarded by freemen as inalienable, and without which, security for life, liberty, and happiness is impossible.

Under the orders of military authority and in the process of reconstruction, civil courts have been allowed to resume their functions with instructions to administer the laws as they existed previous to January 1, 1861, except that in no case shall there be discrimination in reference to color. But in the face of this clear principle of justice the commanding officer of this district was to-day compelled to arrest two justices of the peace for refusing, while in the execution of their office as an inferior court, to receive the testimony of negro men in a case touching the rights of property between a white and a black man, although both sides desired to introduce such testimony and both had more than one witness to prove the same fact. The justices gave as a reason for action "that the laws of Georgia in force previous to January 1, 1861, prohibit the use of negro testimony; they did not know any other law had been established, and did not intend to do wrong or violate military orders." The difficulty is that they did not intend to do right, for, admitting the truth of their excuses, they had failed to inform themselves of the law settled by the war and to become acquainted with the points which the President had declared "no longer debatable." The fact is the moral appreciation of those points is dead, and hence public sentiment fails to compel officers of the law to properly inform themselves. I doubt if there are ten in all Georgia—and one State is a fair sample of the whole South—below the grade of superior judge, who understand the common law of evidence, or who can perceive, through the aid of their own unassisted understanding, the

wrong which may be inflicted upon the negroes by the exclusion of their testimony from the courts of justice. It needs no argument to prove that this right under the law is essential to the preservation of life and liberty, as well as for the protection of property, labor, and the sanctity of the marriage relations. To deprive a citizen of it, in the most enlightened community and under the best laws, leaves him a sport to the vice, cunning, and superior strength of every man who may chance to assail him.

But there are other rights not less essential to the existence of our form of government and not less vital to the public welfare than the one just alluded to for the preservation of personal liberty. In a government based upon the intelligence of the people, in which slavery cannot exist, it is the duty of the legislature to enact such laws as shall enable every man to make the most he can of his intelligence as well as of his labor. It is just as much the duty of the law to render it possible for him to buy education for his children as to buy bread and clothing for them. And precisely upon this point the greatest opposition will be encountered by the freedmen. Between the almost universal prejudice in the South against free schools and the incredulity of even enlightened men in regard to the capabilities of the negro for mental improvement the country need not expect the voluntary adoption of a liberal system of education. When it is remembered that the jealousy excited in the minds of ignorant white people by anything which looks to the elevation of the negro has already resulted in breaking up more than one negro school, it will be perceived that nothing less than military protection can secure the continuance of the philanthropical labors organized by the Freedman's Bureau and Northern educational societies.

Many radical Northern men contend that the negro should also have the privilege of voting, and urge that nothing else can protect him from tyranny; but it should not be forgotten that there is a great deal of difference be-

tween the rights of a freeman and the privileges of a citizen. Property and intelligence are the natural qualifications for the ballot, but in our civil polity the property qualification is almost entirely excluded, and States are held competent to give the privilege to whom they please. While I doubt the right of Congress to interfere in this matter at all, I have no hesitation in saying that the bestowal of suffrage upon the negro at this time would result in an unmitigated evil to Southern society and the country at large. The assertion of General Schurz that it would result in a war of races is no exaggeration and would be a sufficient reason for withholding it even if the negroes as a class could be depended upon to vote intelligently and independently.

It is unnecessary here to enlarge upon this matter, or the absence of all law specially applicable to the freedmen as independent members of society. The indisposition of civil officers to enforce that which in equity and justice is plainly applicable under the orders of military authority would seem to indicate clearly enough the duty of the general Government to continue its protection to these unfortunate people, till the States have manifested an honest intention to give them all the rights enjoyed by their most favored non-voting population.

We shall obtain a clearer view of Southern society by remembering that the white race, not liable to blood contamination, and the black, "subjected to an incessant contamination of an extraneous kind," although physically distinct, have been, for all practical purposes, a unit. Without venturing an opinion as to how far this contamination, the fruits of which may be seen in many households, may be instrumental in the ultimate extinction of the negro race in America, its moral influence upon Southern society cannot be neglected.

At the beginning of the Rebellion there were in the South four orders of men. First, there were the educated and highly intellectual men—politicians, lawyers, divines,

and men of wealth. This class furnished the "leaders," filled all high offices, propagated Southern ideas, and controlled public sentiment. Second, the intermediate order, includes the less intelligent of the professions, planters, business men, overseers, and country politicians. This class was mainly instrumental in adopting the ideas, in following the fashions, and aspiring to the dignity of the first class. Third, were the poor white people, who, from defective organization of society, mental inaptitude, and a variety of other natural causes, were kept in subordination and benighted ignorance. The only pure, unadulterated American "mudsills" are found in the South, and belong to this order. And fourth, there was the negro, who should fairly be classed intellectually with the poor whites.

Socially these classes are entirely distinct. There is no gradual blending of the one with the other as in the Northern states, nor is there the usual proportion of intelligence to ignorance. The third and fourth orders are hopelessly ignorant, and constitute three-fourths of the entire population. At the beginning of the war the first class were completely dominant, and carried with them the entire white population of the South. With the relentless intolerance of feudal aristocrats they crushed out every spark of independent thought remaining true to the idea of national unity, and drove the poor whites into the ranks of the rebel army. So complete was their sway that they held the negroes in subjugation with scarcely an effort, and used the abundant products of their labor to support their armies in the field. No society for political or military purposes was ever more homogeneous. No despot's authority was ever more complete or controlled by more determination and energy. The writer has heard many prominent Southern men assert that the controlling idea of their order had been throughout the war "the establishment of a government in which slavery should be so protected by law and interwoven with their domestic concerns that the one could not be destroyed except at the cost of the other." Their

purposes were so far successful in Georgia, that, in the words of Howell Cobb, there was scarcely a paragraph in their entire statute book which did not either directly or indirectly involve the protection of slavery as its primary object. For a season their plans worked well everywhere, and gave them cheering promises of success, but disaster at last befell their arms, and with disaster the weak-hearted lost faith. The North rose as one man, and with the most determined spirit of loyalty and nationality furnished the Government with a magnificent army, provided it with arms, clothing, and provisions, and pushed it irresistibly forward. Donelson, Shiloh, Antietam, the Proclamation of Freedom, Vicksburg, Gettysburg, Chattanooga, Mission Ridge, Atlanta, the battles of the Wilderness, the Valley, Nashville, the March to the Sea, and finally the fall of Richmond and the complete collapse of the Confederacy followed each other with slow but unerring certainty. The capture of Fort Donelson destroyed their boast of invincibility; that of Vicksburg, the first vital stroke, severed their Confederacy into two parts. That part west of the Mississippi died like the tail of a snake at sundown. While that part east of the great river struggled on with the poor consolation that its losses were "blessings in disguise." The victories of the Wilderness, Atlanta, and the Valley of Virginia strengthened the national faith, saved the national credit, and overwhelmed the Northern allies of rebellion and treason. Sherman's desolating march through Georgia and the Carolinas again divided the Confederacy, separated the rebel armies, rendered their ablest generals hopeless of success, filled the negro with anxious expectations, and convinced the common soldiers that this was "the rich man's war and the poor man's fight." The final collapse of their cause which followed the splendid victories about Richmond found their unity of sentiment destroyed, their substance wasted, their leaders proscribed, and their society, by the destruction of slavery, its only bond, divided into its heterogeneous elements. The highest intellect of the

land was paralyzed by the magnitude of the disaster. The second order, not yet enfranchised from the tyranny of old ideas, was unable to realize the necessity of their situation and unwilling to accept for their guidance the principles which had been forever settled by the war. The poor white people, hopeful of a better day relieved from a tyranny which they had learned to despise, cared only to busy themselves in the reëstablishment of their homes and in collecting such of their personal possessions as had escaped the devastation of warfare. The negroes, hitherto the obedient children of toil, suddenly relieved of their yoke by "Good News from a Far-off Land," resolved to work no longer, but taste fully that liberty whose highest attribute in their dwarfed and benighted minds is a life of idleness and immunity from the lash.

This hasty recital, while it does not describe the absolute condition of the blacks, will give some idea of the white society with which the President was compelled to try the experiment of reconstruction. A moment's consideration will show that no spontaneous political action was possible, except the course to be followed had been clearly and authoritatively defined. The people as a unit looked to the national government for their inspiration, and were willing to submit to whatever terms the President might think proper to dictate. A few hoped to save slavery in one form or another, or believed they would be remunerated for it if abolished. All were feverish and anxious about confiscation, but I do not remember meeting a single person who did not believe himself compelled to accept whatever terms might be extended to him or leave the country.

The first step in the President's policy was the appointment of provisional governors with instructions to call conventions, whose duty it should be to annul the work of secession and reëstablish the sway of civil law, in accordance with the hereditary policy of the country. No clearly defined instructions were given to the conventions to guide

them in the duty they were called upon to perform; they were left perfectly free to exercise their own intelligence and judgment in selecting the course they might think best adapted to their condition. In the interval between the appointment of the provisional governors or the ending of hostilities, and the meeting of the first convention, a reaction set in in Georgia headed by the younger men who had but little experience in public life, and supported by a few of the returned officers more "irrepressible" than the rest, aided by that class of men who had remained at home during the war, and had not, therefore, been "subjugated." Through the agency of this reaction, gaining head every day, the people soon began to imagine that they might possibly obtain better terms than they first expected. They adopted readily the idea that their States had not been out of the Union, and, therefore, might claim the full benefits of the fact, and that, after all, they were still sovereignties capable of doing a variety of things independent of national dictation. The new men were ambitious to obtain place, and the old leaders were sagacious enough to put them forward to undo the work of rebellion and receive whatever odium might be attached thereto. This was the case particularly with such of the new men as had claimed to be originally conservative or for the Union. When the conventions finally assembled, the reaction had progressed so far that the question was not, "How much shall be done to put our section right and engraft upon its organic laws the principles settled by the war?" but, "How little can we do and get our States recognized?" Most of the conventions had in them an unusually large number of gray-haired men, noted for their intelligence as well as devotion to the Union and conservative tendencies during the war. Among these men there were not wanting experienced legislators, who saw plainly their duty to the loyal States as well as to their own people, and who exerted their influence to secure such action by the conventions as would prove acceptable to Congress and obtain for

the States recently in rebellion a speedy restoration of the privileges of representation and government. But these men, although supported by the advice of the President, could neither overcome the noisy exponents of secession and State rights nor control public sentiment. The action of Georgia is sufficiently like that of the other states to be taken as a fair example. Her convention "repealed" the ordinance of secession, instead of declaring it "null and void"; "repudiated" the debt accumulated in conducting war against the United States, instead of pronouncing it "illegal and fraudulent." They "abolished" slavery and failed to adopt the constitutional amendment to that effect, instead of asserting that it had ceased to exist by virtue of the President's Proclamation and the acts of Congress giving the force of law thereto. They failed to define and render sacred the rights of freedmen, but passed a resolution reciting their obligation to give "efficient protection" to the freedmen, and "to promote among them the observance of law and order, habits of industry, and moral improvement," and appointed a commission of five persons "to prepare and report a code or system of laws" for their government and regulating how and in what cases they might be permitted to testify in the courts.

The temper displayed by this convention was the reverse of grave, dispassionate, and dignified; its legislation was marked by illiberality, bad taste, defective judgment, and absence of the spirit of loyalty; many of the speeches were rebellious in tone, and couched in language peculiar to the chivalry of other days, and one member went so far as to denounce the President's telegram advising the repudiation of the rebel war debt, as an attempt "to dictate to a sovereign convention." Since the termination of the convention, the members who were loyal enough to advocate the adoption of the President's views have been condemned by public sentiment. Not a single representative to Congress has been elected who can take the test oath. It is clear the Southern people have failed to appreciate

the magnanimity of the Government, and have voluntarily rejected its measures of reconciliation. They do not seem to have realized the changes which have taken place in the last four years, either in their own condition or that of the loyal States. It is hard for them to perceive, at a glance, the difference between a negro man free and a negro man enslaved, or to understand that by the laws of the United States a freedman is a free man, and that justice is color-blind. The "manifold infirmities of the flesh" are not yet subjugated, even in the North; the prejudices of race, the passions of the ignorant, and the aggressive tendencies of unbridled arrogance and cruelty, fostered by years of mastership, cannot be uprooted in a day, much less can they be expected in a day to yield to a spirit of forbearance and justice. We can see now that the Government in its blindness had committed a grave error, very natural and therefore excusable. It should have exercised its military right "to dictate the terms," not "advise" them, and to compel their adoption as a "condition precedent" to the complete restoration of civil functions to the rebel States. Had the internal condition of the South been similar to that which generally obtains in a territory during its natural growth to the importance of a State, the President would not have misplaced his confidence in "the sagacity, intelligence, and loyalty of the people." An executive proclamation, enforced, if necessary, by the military forces of the Government, would have been received with more consideration than has been accorded the spoken admonitions of the chief magistrate.

It is now clearly the duty of Congress to see that the conditions herein set forth shall be adopted by all the states recently in rebellion, and that they shall embody them in their organic laws without further evasion or indirection, before they are admitted to the full enjoyment of the privileges of the loyal States. In the performance of this duty Congress may also require each State to present satisfactory evidence of an intention to provide for

all classes of its citizens the means of educating their children. No government which neglects this high and solemn duty can justly claim to be republican in form, since upon the intelligence of the people it must depend for its very existence. Congress should also take care to see that every member of either House is required to present satisfactory evidence in the form of an oath that he has abjured all sympathy with the doctrines of secession and rebellion; is sorry for his past acts in opposition to the national authority; that he will henceforth and forever, in word, thought, and act, bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America, and protect, preserve, and defend the Constitution and the laws enacted thereunder against all their enemies and opposers, whether foreign or domestic. They should go farther and declare that all cabinet ministers, members of Congress, generals, and judges of the so-called Confederate States, and all governors of either of them, are forever disqualified from holding any office or trust under the Government of the United States. Having done all this, they may repeal the test oath as it now stands, and leave to the separate States the question of negro suffrage, that it shall be properly and intelligently exercised for the advancement of local interests as well as the national honor and glory.

This still leaves the negro question, in its practical aspect, unsolved. As far as we have proposed to provide by forms of law for the primary rights of the freedmen, and however liberal may be these laws, they must depend for their effect upon white men, who have shown but little interest in them, and who find it so hard to understand the difference between the freedman and a slave. But under our system of government this is the best we can do; and under the most favorable circumstances the negro must be more or less subject to the passions and prejudices of white men. I have no idea that any system, either under the general government or that of a State, can be devised which will secure exact justice to the black race, or im-

munity from abuse and oppression; so it may be safely assumed that the problem of the moral, intellectual, and social regeneration of the negro is by no means simple or free from serious complications. In order that philanthropy and enlightened effort may accomplish the greatest possible amount of good toward a work of such great importance, it is necessary that the public should understand the difficulties likely to be encountered and that they should not lose sight of the indolence and inferior aptitude, either natural or induced in the negro by years of bondage, while endeavoring to counteract the vice and prejudices of white men.

It has been said, and it is widely believed, that the negro is physiologically different from the Caucasian, and inferior to the latter in mental and physical activity, so that, if left entirely free from extraneous influences, we need not expect as high a state of social, moral, and intellectual development as that attained by the white people among whom his lot is cast. Whatever may have been his moral condition in ages past, or whatever progress may become possible for him in the future, is a matter of speculation; but close observation leaves me no doubt that "the humanizing influences" of slavery, even in the South, have not tended to develop his intellectual and moral qualities to the degree claimed by Southern men of intelligence and fairness. Among women and another class of men, the following remark, in discussions touching the negro character, is very common: "You Northern people do not understand this question; you are ignorant of the negro's true character; he is lazy, deceitful, dishonest, and improvident, utterly worthless now that he is free, and only useful as a slave." Without undertaking here to investigate the truth of this analysis of character, or, if true, how it became possible, it is not unfair to suppose that Northern men of intelligence, free from the bias of interest and other natural predisposition to prejudice, are quite as apt as Southerners to judge the question in all its bearings, dispassionately

and practically. The results of the war should suggest the bare possibility to the Southern people that they do not fully understand "the question," and are not likely to, so long as they view it only in the light of their own experience

It is true that the freedmen are not models of industry, frankness, honesty, or discretion. As a class they may be deceitful, idle, inclined to theft, and pitiably ignorant. They have no conception of the nature of a contract, or its obligations, and but limited ideas of duty to each other and their employers. Nor is this the worst. Professor Draper, in his "Thoughts on American Civil Policy," says, in the full blaze of this enlightened age, that the civilized world will scarcely believe that a State recognizing and practicing polygamy should be allowed to exist in the very heart of the great Republic. But the "civilized world" does not know half the truth, and will find it hard to believe that one-third of the entire population of the Southern States, one-seventh of that of the United States, were born out of lawful wedlock; and yet this is so! Strange as it may seem, there has never been a legally solemnized marriage among the entire black population while in a state of slavery. No slave State ever permitted such a thing, or made the slightest provision for it. To be sure, many piously inclined masters were accustomed to compel their servants to be married by a clergyman, either white or black, most commonly the latter; but these marriages were a mere semblance and a mockery of that holy sacrament. They had no stability in law, and but little in custom, and could be dissolved at the will of the master, or the whim of either party. The value of negro property was too great to permit either the men or women to live unmarried, so that as fast as they reached the adult age they were paired off. The negro man, where it was practicable, always had a wife on his master's place, but in many cases they selected from the neighboring plantation, so that they could have the privilege, usually granted, of visiting their

wives Saturday night and getting back home to work late on Monday. I have heard of several cases in which the men had three wives, living on different plantations, and am told that this was no uncommon occurrence. The common practice is not that of open polygamy, but the negroes themselves compel the men to wait for the new wife till the old one is abandoned, and, in some cases, if the master discovers a man has a wife at home and one elsewhere, he compels the relinquishment of one or the other. But there is no such thing known as a marriage among negroes which might not be severed either by caprice, removal, sale, or the will of the master. The result of the system is that such a thing as virtue among the blacks is unknown.

The greatest difficulty experienced in dealing with the negroes and their late masters arises from this extraordinary state of affairs. It is no uncommon thing for the negro men to find themselves charged with more than one family, and, in order to relieve themselves of their burdens, compelled to go to another neighborhood. This fact, together with the general desire they have to prove their freedom by getting out of the reach of their old masters, accounts for the daily complaint among the planters that they have nobody left upon their places but women and children. "The men have all gone, and if they would take their families I wouldn't care." Yet very intelligent men and women tell us, in view of these facts, and with the perfect assurance of its truth: "Negroes have no idea of the duty of parents to each other, or to their children; they are naturally loose and lascivious in disposition, and cannot be made to care for their children, or live in lawful wedlock."

This may not be entirely true, but it would seem to a dispassionate person, with a system such as I have described, to be entirely false. Let us look still further at this subject, for herein lies the greatest crime of slavery, since it debases not only the negro race, but poisons the society of the whites throughout the whole South. Among

the four millions of negroes released from slavery, there is not a single family organized under the operations of the Southern code in accordance with the principles of Christian civilization! The legislators and thinking men of the South, unless they are blind, may see enough in this astounding fact to incite in them the gravest fears for the future of their country. The Southern people have gathered golden harvests for many years, careless of the fact that in doing so they have scattered seeds more fatal than dragons' teeth. The system of slavery in its mildest form is the legitimate origin of every vicious habit and form of immorality with which the freedmen are afflicted. Living in cabins clustered about the overseer's or master's house, they had no care but to draw their rations, and go to the fields at the sound of the horn. They looked to the master for everything they were accustomed to receive, and are, therefore, improvident and lazy; they were paid nothing but scanty "board and clothes" for their labor, and are, therefore, "inclined to steal"; they had no inducements to tell the truth and do right, and are therefore "deceitful"; they were not allowed the privileges of education—it was a penal offense in most Southern States to teach them to read—and they were therefore "ignorant"; their rights as men and women, as husbands and wives, as parents and children, were neither taught nor protected by law; they are, therefore, given to the practice of adultery and the neglect of their offspring. A white man and his wife, with three or four legitimate children, and a hundred negro servants, do not constitute a family in accordance with the principles of our religion and race. In such a patriarchal or oriental assemblage, every servant, instead of looking to his own parents for enlightened instruction and guidance, looks to the master, but in vain, for he is frequently the creature of vice, ignorance, and cupidity, either of which transmits its own influence, like the error of an algebraic equation, with an increasing ratio the further it goes. Where no "home" exists we do not ex-

pect home virtues. And when not a man of a whole race owns his own cabin or a foot of land, the difficulties of regeneration may be partly imagined. The South may claim that it is not to blame for the negro's condition, and urge that it is the natural result of the means necessarily adopted to protect slavery from the attack of abolitionists; but for purposes of reform it is a matter of little importance who may be culpable, or by what means the negroes were brought to their present condition, the vital question is, how shall their condition be ameliorated?

A variety of opinions have been given to the country. General Cox recommends colonization; but that, however good in itself, is impracticable, and I doubt its efficacy. The Government can neither afford the expense, nor with justice compel the negroes to accept such a questionable solution of their troubles. Southern men say: "We will push them to the wall; they must work as freedmen, and we are unwilling to have them about, but we will get along with them as well as we can till we can obtain a supply of European immigrants." This is neither good policy nor very likely to succeed. Immigrants will not settle in the South to compete with negro labor, nor will they consent to pay high prices for land when they can obtain it in the West for almost nothing, and become at once as respectable and prosperous as their neighbors. The South is essentially a planting country, and not adapted to small farming; and should immigration set toward it, it will be gradual and increase but slowly. Enterprising Yankees, who can take the test oath, practice the professions, and induce negroes to work for fair wages, will be the first to go South. In fact, they have already invaded every part of that region, and are making arrangements to cultivate cotton plantations extensively. If they are ordinarily successful, they will replace ill-natured and improvident planters rather than the blacks. Vine and fruit growers and artisans may also find immediate inducements to go South. But the negroes are already there, settled upon the land, adapted for

the climate, and willing to work for those who will treat them justly; and they must work, or both classes will starve. The Southern planters must not deceive themselves; they cannot dispense with the freedman. They must depend upon him to cultivate their fields and gather their harvests; but slavery is dead, and they cannot entice him to his labor with the lash. They must give him full wages for full work, protect him in all his rights by equitable and humane laws, educate his children, and lift him morally and intellectually to the dignity of the freeman. They must do better and more than all that. They must cure the vices of bondage, by organizing negro society into families, according to the principles of Christian civilization—families consisting of one man, one wife, and the legitimate offspring thereof, living in "homes," fixed upon the land, and guarded as jealously by the laws as the families of white men. The present communal system must be broken up; no more polygamy, ignored by law, and sanctioned by custom; no more concubinage by purchase or inheritance, under the cover of domestic usage, but plain, simple justice. With all that can be accomplished by the most enlightened legislation, the work of regeneration will progress but slowly, and leave an ample field for the most intelligent missionary labor. This work is not exclusively the business of the South, but demands attention at the hands of the entire nation.

Four millions of practical heathens are crying for light; the instruction they have received, although involving the arts of labor, has bonded them body and soul to moral darkness. The religion taught them has been a mockery, because they were compelled to witness the daily violation of its most sacred precepts. We say the South is mainly concerned in this work, but how much of the patience, labor, and faith, necessary for its success, can be expected from her people? I fear but little. In the aggregate there are many thousand enlightened, humane, and Christian people in the South who would scorn to inflict a wanton

wrong upon any human being, who have been kind, indulgent, and sympathizing masters; but it is unfortunately true that even they, as a general rule, doubt the capacity of the negro for mental and moral improvement. The masses look with extreme jealousy at any one who advocates negro schools, and render it impossible for a timid person to teach one, except under military protection. Yet, education is the only means of opening the mind for the reception of moral and social truth, and upon it must rest our only hope of an intellectual regeneration of the entire South, white as well as black.

With such a system of laws and education as justice demands, and which the Southern people must be compelled to enact and enforce, the freedman may ultimately become a freeman in mind as well as person.

There is, however, a grave obstacle in the way to his complete independence, to which I have not yet adverted. I mean that of obtaining permanent and cheap homesteads, without which the families cannot be organized. This organization, as the social unit, is just as essential as that of the battalion in military matters. General Saxton's order touching this matter is well enough if it could be enforced; but could the President have been induced to exact, as a condition to pardon, a bond from every rebel holding property to the value of $20,000 or over, that he would give to every respectable and honest freedman, who had previously belonged to him, a life lease to as much land as he and his family could cultivate, a substantial beginning would have been made in the right direction. This class of men own nearly all of the land in the South, and each one of them could find upon his place several negroes who would be good tenants in any country. To prevent oppression to the owners, it would have been well enough to allow them a fair rate of rent, but to compel them to sell to the negro at least forty acres whenever the latter became able to pay for it at its market value. This is, however, impracticable as a government measure, but it contains a suggestion to the

planters, the adoption of which may ultimately become a matter of profit to them as well as to the freedmen.

No system of philanthropy, whether under the auspices of the Government or benevolent societies, can neglect to consider the influence of this home idea, and experience more than partial success. The planters are in a fair way to realize its significance involuntarily. The negroes at this time throughout the South are refusing to hire themselves for the ensuing year. They entertain the idea that the government intends to divide among them, during Christmas week, the lands, produce, stock, and implements of their old masters. The origin of this notion is not known, though it probably grew from the following remarks so often made to the too-credulous negroes: "We are going to whip these rebels after a while, and then we intend to give you all their property." The idea, once started, found ready believers, and may have been strengthened by the advice of military commanders, urging the negroes to continue work, on the promise that they should have a portion of the crop. At all events they are making no contracts. Planters are becoming generally discouraged, and are anxious to rent or sell their lands. Should they fail to do one thing or the other, and fail to make a crop themselves, they will find their land at the end of the year in the forcible possession of tenants that cannot be easily ejected. Thus the negro dream of a division may be realized at no distant day. Some landowners in southwestern Georgia have abandoned their lands or rented them to the negroes on shares, but this has created great excitement. A county meeting has been held and resolutions adopted, the tenor of which is that negroes shall not be permitted to become tenants, that such "privileges and immunities" are dangerous to the white population, and prejudicial to the interests of the blacks! The spirit of these resolutions is simply infamous. Should it be developed generally, and the President permit the organization of the militia in accordance with the present indications, it would be well for Congress to provide

for the increase of the regular army to one hundred and fifty thousand men, for nothing short of that force could possibly maintain public tranquillity.

The excuses given by the South for this militia movement are poorly grounded. There is no possible danger of a negro outbreak if the negroes are simply let alone. There is not a county in the South in which a sheriff and his deputy cannot enforce any legal process. Whatever may be the moral and intellectual qualities of the negro, he is the most non-combative, patient, and docile of the human race. But if he is not so, the Southern militia will soon reduce him to that condition; and I have no hesitation in saying its organization will result in the systematic infliction of more deliberate, wanton, and unprovoked cruelty upon those unfortunate people than they were ever compelled to undergo in a state of slavery. One or two years of the old-fashioned "patrol system" will result in the practical re-subjugation of the entire race; neither ballot nor bullet can save them, unless the Government continues the functions of the Freedman's Bureau, and gives it an organization of ten times its present efficiency in men and administration. It will not do yet to trust State laws or State militia to do the work of that Bureau. It is the only hope of the negro, feeble as it is; it needs more officers, and, instead of abolishing it, Congress should perfect its organization, make it self-supporting if possible, and give it such a code of laws as would secure uniform administration throughout the South. I have no doubt that with the loan of ten or fifteen millions of dollars the Bureau can be so administered as to afford efficient protection to negroes, organize their industry, and found a system of education which shall gradually make the race self-supporting and useful to society at large.

The ballot is a poor remedy for ignorance, vice, and prejudice. Even in the hands of the negroes, it could scarcely overwhelm three such dragons, defended by double their numbers. Under the present aspect of affairs it would

be anything but kindness to give it to them by national interference. Aside from the increased jealousy and violence which would be engendered on the part of the whites, and the necessity which would at once arise for the increase of the national armed force to preserve order and repress outbreaks, it is almost certain that a few shrewd men with plenty of money could control every negro vote even in the interest of Southern policy. No ignorant farm negro working for ten dollars per month would fail to sell his vote for two dollars and a whole day's frolic.

Let the Government rather exercise its supreme authority in compelling the States to pass such laws and give such assurances as will secure equal and exact justice for every freedman; and let an enlightened public sentiment constrain the adoption of such a national system of schools as shall qualify every adult of sound mind to exercise the privilege of suffrage. When education and intelligence have become universal, suffrage may be so regulated as to secure its virtuous and universal enjoyment. On the principles embodied in this paper I confidently believe the negro question, in its economical, moral, intellectual, and social aspects, can be solved. They accord with the genius of our institutions and the principles of justice, and are worthy of a trial. When they shall have been adopted, the South will find free labor profitable, and its own reward in the pleasures of enlightened and humane policy.

The war has done much toward giving the Southern people free speech, but they must do much more themselves before they can hope to enjoy free thought. Human slavery has ceased to exist, but mental slavery yet exerts its influence against the best interests of the country. Let them throw off the yoke, submit to the inevitable destinies of the great Republic, abandon sympathy for a dream of the past, and join heart and hand with the North in the glorious work of progress and education.

Free press, free speech, free schools, and free pulpits are essential to the propagation of free thought and the perpetuation of free government!

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